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## Collaboration Yields New SARS Findings

By Xiao Rong

A joint research team in Hong Kong and Shenzhen announced last Friday they had traced the SARS coronavirus to a similar virus found in the civet cat, a wild animal traditionally considered a delicacy in Guangdong Province.

Three strains of the SARS-like virus isolated from six civet cats and a raccoon were found to be 99 percent identical to the human SARS virus, and sequencing of their genes suggests the animal form of the virus is the precursor of the human form.

"This could be a very significant step if accurate," commented World Health Organization Beijing spokesman Bob Dietz. "It means that we could be closer in finding the link between animals and humans that has always been suspected."

### Breakthrough in SARS studies

Researchers from Hong Kong University and the Shenzhen Center for Disease Control and Prevention last November established a joint working team with the aim of tracing the SARS coronavirus, of which the source, modes of transmission and epidemiology are largely unknown.

Speaking at a press conference last Friday in Shenzhen, Professor Guan Yi of the Hong Kong University Microbiology Department, said it is probable that the coronavirus originates from an animal or animals closely related to human beings.

The joint study began with wild animals, among which were eight species of mammals taken from Shenzhen's Dongmen wild game market, including civet cats, raccoons, badgers and weasels.

Sequencing of viruses isolated from these animals showed that they are identical with the human SARS virus, with the exception of a small additional sequence.

"It's possible that after jumping from wild animals like civet cats to humans, the SARS virus mutated and became more infectious and lethal to humans. But this remains to be further studied," Guan Yi said at the press conference.

Researchers also found SARS antibodies in five of the ten tested wild animal traders, though none had developed any of the flu-like symptoms of the disease, according to He Yaqing, an expert at the Shenzhen disease control center.

### Further study needed

"Though we have found a form of the coronavirus in wild animals that is similar to the human SARS virus, it doesn't mean there are not other precursors developed before the coronavirus found in wild animals," said Guan Yi. "And there remains the possibility that the SARS-like virus found in the civet cats cannot be contracted by human beings. This is still under research."

Zhuang Zhixiong, director of the Shenzhen disease control center, said they will test a wider range of animal samples to determine whether the virus found in civet cats is the only possible origin of the human SARS virus.

"To this extent, our work has just begun," he stressed.

WHO also suggests that much more research is needed before any firm conclusions can be reached, though the organization contends the study has provided a first indication that the SARS virus exists outside a



A caged civet cat in a restaurant in Guangzhou, where wild animals are a local delicacy.

Xinhua Photo

human host.

"Many fundamental questions remain — samples were taken from one market only. Studies need to determine how widespread the SARS virus might be in animals in Guangdong and elsewhere, and if these animals can excrete the virus in an amount sufficient to infect humans," a report issued by WHO last Friday stated.

According to Zhang Zhibin, director of the Institute of Zoology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, it remains to be investigated whether the virus found in the tested civet cat resulted from pollution of the sample or the consumption of an infected prey by the animal.

Zhang's institute is also involved in a project to trace the SARS virus and its connection with animals.

"The initial findings of our fellow scientists from Hong Kong and Shenzhen have enlightened us considerably. Our next goal is to focus on the identification of those natural species that may be possible sources of the SARS virus," said Zhang.

### Communication is the key

Zhang Zhibin commented positively on the breakthrough of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen joint study team. At the same time he called for better collaboration between different scientific organizations and public health authorities to ensure further progress in SARS related studies.

"Different scientific fields, such as microbiology, zoology, epidemiology and entomology may have different approaches and methods to begin research on SARS, which will more or less be complementary to each

other," said Zhang Zhibin. "So active communication is vital."

Zhang's colleague, Zhang Shuyi, a member of the national scientific team of the anti-SARS headquarters, shared his view that a well-organized communication network involving various scientific fields is necessary to help scientific research bear more fruits.

Zhang Shuyi has just returned from Guangdong, where he is seeking cooperation from the local disease control center and other scientific organizations for the SARS project that he has focused on.

"I think the scientists from Hong Kong and Shenzhen have really achieved a great victory this time, mostly due to their long term cooperation and mutual understanding," said Zhang.

Zhang contends the future success of SARS-related research in China will to a certain extent depend on better collaboration between various departments as well as cross-subject cooperation.

Besides the establishment of a public health emergency handling system, an emergency scientific research handling network should also be set up in China, to ensure effective coordination between various scientific institutions, according to Chen Hao, former deputy director of the policy research bureau of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

"In the wake of this emergency, scientists from different sectors should unite to conquer the common threats to mankind, regardless of departmental interests or rankings," said Wang Jian, deputy director of the Beijing Genome Institute of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

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## SARS Figures Update

There were three new SARS cases and two new deaths between 10 am May 28 and 10 am May 29 on the Chinese mainland. Beijing reported three new SARS cases and one new death, the Ministry of Health reported Thursday.

The cumulative total of confirmed SARS cases on the Chinese mainland rose to 5,325, while the number of SARS patients discharged from hospitals was 3,121 and the death toll reached 327, the ministry said in its daily report.

## Temperature Rises for New Long Lepers



By Andrew McEwen and Ed Jocelyn

They make us nervous. Men in little white coats are watching and waiting for us all across China.

"What's up, doc?" said Andy to the first, who was hiding in a white house on the Beipan riverbank in Southwest Guizhou. The man inserted medical instruments into swampy pits as we sat on low stools watching the sun set over the bridge.

The central leadership of the Red Army crossed here on pontoons in 1935. They did not have to worry, as we do, about being taken away by the men in white coats.

Andy, suffering from a bronchitis hangover for more than three months, received a clean bill of health. He flashed a V-for-victory sign at Ed.

Ed was running a temperature.

"Mad dog! Arrest him! Contain him! Rapunzel!" Andy screeched in English. That is, until Ed pointed out that if one went down, then medically speaking, both would most certainly be quarantined together.

Ed moved on to discuss the exciting possibilities of vegetarian cuisine in a Chinese hospital.

Andy fell silent. Ed knew what to say.

"Do you have any idea how we got here?" he said to the man, pointing at our rucksacks.

"We just walked 24 kilometers in over 30-degree temperatures along open country road."

The man in the white coat blinked, glanced at our packs, then squinted at Ed as though trying to locate something very small indeed inside his skull.

"OK, take care and get some rest," he said. "You can go now." And that was it. He wished us well on our Quixotic quest.

We took a photo with him at the SARS test station. So

thanks for the thermometers, Dr. Wang Bing.

Instead of our planned triumphant march into Baiceng at dusk, we slouched into a dark town grouchy, hungry and sleepy, in no mood for idle chit-chat or fraternizing with the natives — same as any other day on the New Long March in other words.

"You can't stay here," said the landlady of the first inn. She explained to others she was worried about SARS. So Ed cracked his own little one-liner.

"It's not *fei dian*," said Ed. "It's *fei hua*."

Nobody laughed. You see, in Chinese "*fei dian*" means "SARS" and "*fei hua*" means, well, never mind, you had to be there...

The landlady was there, but she failed to see the funny side. She seemed affronted we had understood what she was saying. As foreigners, we aren't supposed to be able to understand mandarin — maybe she felt we had been "listening in" on her private conversation with the crowd.

After all, she was not discriminating against us because we were foreigners. We were strangers, people perhaps from Guangdong or worse, the plague city itself.

Since our first temperature test before Baiceng, the news from our many friends in Beijing has gone from bad to worse. Once upon a time, at least two TV crews and a top Shanghai journalist had planned to meet us in Yunnan. Now, of course, nobody is coming.

Our biggest sponsors — Guizhou Tourism Bureau — wanted to come out to wave goodbye as we left their SARS-free province for another SARS-free province. But no can do. Our Sichuan press conference is postponed indefinitely.

(Continued on Page 2)



Andy and Ed celebrate passing the SARS test administered by Dr. Wang Bing, Beipan River, Guizhou, May 3.



# Prevention Efforts Focus on Migrant Workers

By Chen Ying/Xinhua

The Beijing municipal government is giving priority to SARS prevention work among migrant workers, said a senior Beijing official here on Saturday last week.

Cai Fuchao, director of the publicity department of the CPC municipal committee, said at a press conference

that over the past week, migrant workers topped the list of reported probable and suspected SARS cases in terms of occupation.

Many migrant workers are expected to return to the city with the end of spring farming in rural areas, so the government is making intensified efforts to prevent the spread of SARS

among them, Cai said.

The Beijing Health Bureau issued a notice Saturday last week decreeing that migrant workers would not be able to get work documents without first passing a physical examination. The bureau also named 197 hospitals as designated sites for such health checks.

According to the notice, the examinations must include checks of temperature, medical history, liver function and stool as well as chest X-rays, and not cost more than 30.5 yuan. Hospitals that find people with SARS-like symptoms should get and keep detailed information about those individuals and immediately send them to fever clinics.

## Ministry Launches Nationwide Epidemic Inspection Campaign

By Chen Ying

The Ministry of Health issued an urgent notice on the launch of inspections of epidemic prevention and treatment efforts nationwide this Monday.

According to the notice, every city and county must conduct comprehensive inspections of its epidemic prevention and control work from June 1 to 15. Provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities are required to hold random inspections, while the Ministry of Health will conduct its own random inspections around the country.

Moreover, every province, autonomous region and municipality should report information, problems, conclusions and suggestions uncovered during the inspections to the ministry before June 20.

## Local Entertainment Venues Must Wait to Reopen

By Zhao Hongyi

While most commercial activity in Beijing has returned to normal, local theaters, cinemas and Internet cafes will have to wait to reopen, Cai Fuchao, spokesman for the municipal government and the director of the publicity department of the CPC municipal committee, announced earlier this week.

He explained that human traffic at such public entertainment sites is high, raising the risk of cross-infection of SARS.

"We cannot adopt effective controls for people entering and leaving these sites all the time," admitted Cai. "Therefore, they cannot return to normal operation for the time being."

Cai promised the government would put the issue on its agenda once the SARS epidemic bottoms out, and listed two criteria for the reopening of these businesses. First, they must be safe, well ventilated and regularly disinfected. Second, theaters can only sell half their seats during the first phase of reopening and arrange customers in every other row to try to reduce chances of cross-infection.

## Rules Ensure Safety of University Exam

By Lily Li

Local educational authorities announced rules on Tuesday related to SARS prevention among students taking the university entrance examination on June 7 and 8. According to the rules, examination sites are to be classified into two types, ordinary and quarantined, the latter to be used by students living in quarantine zones or those who have no symptoms of SARS but have been in close contact with suspected or confirmed SARS patients.

The number of Beijing examination sites has increased from 90 last year to an unprecedented 200, containing 4,800 exam rooms, including 600 spare ones for emergency use.

Ordinary exam rooms will house 20 seats each, while quarantine rooms should contain no more than eight chairs. Students planning to take the tests have been asked to monitor their body temperatures since May 24 and truthfully record the results on special health cards. Those cards must be turned in before students enter their exam rooms, and participants will continue to be temperature tested during the two days.

Preventative measures such as disinfecting rooms and requiring the wearing of masks have been taken to ensure the exams go ahead as scheduled.

People suspected of having SARS will not be allowed to take part in the nationwide examination, nor will anyone found to have turned in false temperature reports.



To prevent the possible spread of SARS, protective glass screens have been installed at the 38 inspection passages at Beijing Capital International Airport. Photo by Zhang Peng

# Government Suggests Health Check Before Heading Abroad

By Lily Li

The Beijing Administration for Entry and Exit Inspection and Quarantine has published notices over the past month recommending citizens intending to travel abroad to first receive official No SARS Symptoms Medical Certificates.

Worldwide, 110 countries have

adopted inspection and quarantine measures for Chinese citizens or travelers from China as a result of the SARS epidemic. According to sources from the administration, the recommended type of medical certificate is recognized by the WHO and can make it easier for Chinese to enter other countries.

Branches of the Beijing Health Care Center for International Travel are responsible for issuing the certificates. Sources from the center say they signed 1,100 certificates from April 1 to May 22 and that there have been no reported cases of people carrying the certificates being stopped from entering other countries.

## Experts Advise Staying Alert

By Chen Ying

A research group led by Dr. Shi Kan from the Institute of Psychology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences issued a research report recently, concluding people need to pay greater attention to four main points in facing the SARS epidemic.

The group assembled a questionnaire and then surveyed 1,836 people in Beijing and the nearby cities of Tianjin, Shijiazhuang, Hohhot and Taiyuan to compare the psychological responses of people in different areas towards SARS.

The researchers' first conclusion is that people are prematurely relaxing

about the threat of SARS. According to their survey, urban residents are generally calmer about the situation than people living in suburban or rural areas. Dr. Shi's team deems such attitudes as dangerous, considering reports of suspected cases only began to fall on May 21, meaning that everyone needs to maintain careful awareness of sanitation, avoid large gatherings and continue to protect themselves.

The report also mentions the need to strengthen information communication routes and improve cities' prevention and alert systems. The group's survey showed that residents of the four other

cities had relatively little understanding of SARS and did not pay close attention to information on the disease issued by the government, clearly a hurdle to preventing SARS outbreaks in those areas.

The experts suggested the Beijing government pass on its SARS management model and increase its material support to those cities. Finally, the report concludes that great attention needs to be paid to students at schools put under quarantine, and towards the effective training of people in suburban and rural areas along with the establishment of prevention mechanisms for migrant workers returning to cities.

## New Long March

(Continued from page 1)

SARS has not only killed off local cooperation and media events, but also prevented our coordinator Tracy Jia from doing her main job — bringing us badly needed supplies. Friends, including one from Canada, will not be coming to join us.

Morale suffered further from the closure of Guizhou's Internet bars. We had grown to rely upon them for sending stories and checking email.



The Marchers ran into their first anti-SARS slogan in Donggua Lin village in Guizhou on May 8.

Marching ain't what it used to be. It's not just the men in white masks puffing cigarettes at us at every county and provincial border crossing. On top of them, there's the busybodies who telephone the authorities after glimpsing "outsiders" walk by.

That means everywhere we walk, the first to welcome us are the police. They pull up in fast vehicles without license plates, step out brandishing identity cards which they don't take too kindly to us examining. Then they demand our

documents and ask us things like "Why were you taking photographs?"

Before SARS, nobody seemed to mind, but the climate has changed. And so to be frank, SARS has seriously affected our progress — we are running two weeks late at time of writing. And all these bad SARS vibes have been happening in happy, friendly, SARS-free Guizhou. Sichuan soon.

Recently in Zhenfeng, southwest Guizhou, Ed and Andy decided it was important to sit down and air doubts, to talk openly about the political, financial and logistical problems engulfing the New Long March. With circumstances worsening by the day, it seemed important to think the unthinkable — consider under what circumstances we would quit.

Ed spoke first. After outlining the minutes of the last meeting, he delivered a report on the objective and subjective factors influencing future strategy. He then tabled a draft resolution.

"I say, we keep going, whatever, regardless."

"Seconded," said Andy.

The Zhenfeng Meeting adjourned to a local restaurant, where a cold bottle of beer was ordered by unanimous vote.

Check [www.longmarch2003.com](http://www.longmarch2003.com) for the latest on Andy and Ed's progress

## Joint Efforts Underway to Develop Vaccine

The University of Hong Kong, Guangzhou Medical College and Fudan University are working together to develop a SARS vaccine, according to a press release from the University of Hong Kong issued on Monday.

An activated strain of the SARS coronavirus is now ready for animal testing as a tentative vaccine, continued the press release.

Researchers affirmed that it is still too early to tell whether this experimental vaccine will prove safe or effective in humans, and human tests will not be conducted in the near future.

The results of the preliminary animal tests could be available in six months, researchers said.

(Xinhua)

## Standards for Glasses and Masks in Effect

By Lily Li

Two new rules for SARS prevention materials, the Technological Requirements for Medical Glasses and Ordinary Knitted Masks, have taken effect, according to an announcement made by the Beijing Bureau of Quality and Technical Supervision last week.

The two rules are the first in China to set standards for the production of disease prevention materials. They offer basic requirements for the quality of medical glasses and masks, intended to improve market order and protect consumers' health.

## Cutting-Edge Products Put on Display

By Alicia Xiao

High-tech companies in the Haidian Science and Technology Park contributed to the city's fight against SARS by presenting their latest anti-SARS products at a two-day exhibition that started Tuesday in the Haidian Exhibition Hall.

Products on display included instant infrared thermometers, audio-video tele-conference facilities, one-off waste containment bags used instead of flushing toilets and environmentally friendly phlegm collection bags.

A total of 68 enterprises took part in the exhibition, showing 92 newly developed anti-SARS items. Some of the products have already been put into use since the announcement of the SARS outbreak in late April.

## Almost-Graduates Allowed Back on Campus Next Month

By Lily Li

Last Friday, the Beijing Education Committee approved the plans of 48 local universities to allow students that will graduate this summer to return to campus.

Senior students that left their schools for internships or other reasons before all campuses were closed will be able to return to take part in their scheduled graduation ceremonies as of June 10.

Xia Qiang, committee vice secretary general of the committee, said another 12 universities' plans were not complete and need amending before they can receive approval.

## Week of Quarantine Required Before Diploma

By Lily Li

The Beijing Education Committee announced detailed rules on Sunday regarding senior students returning to university campuses.

According to those rules, returning students must undergo seven-day quarantines when first back at their schools. Parents and others are forbidden from accompanying or visiting the students.

Students who exhibit SARS symptoms such as coughing or temperatures over 37.2°C will not be allowed to return to their universities.

## Home Decoration OK'd to Resume On June 1

By Lily Li

Home decoration, suspended for the past few weeks due to the SARS epidemic, can resume on June 1 and residents can sign new remodeling contracts as of that date, according to a statement issued by the Beijing Real Estate Bureau on Monday.

However, interior decoration and remodeling companies must report to residential committees before beginning work. Residential committees and concerned housing management companies can refuse entry to unqualified companies and have the right to check workers' temperatures and halt work that may impact residents' health.



# Taxi Driver Returns Runaway

By Lily Li

Beijing Transportation Bureau published a thank-you letter on its website last Wednesday from Chang Xindian Hospital.

The letter was addressed to Xu Laiqun, a 35-year-old driver for the Jin Jian Taxi Company, praising him for preventing a SARS patient from fleeing.

On the morning of May 15, Xu Laiqun picked up a youth wearing a blue sports shirt and white trousers with pink stripes near Chang Xindian Hospital in Fengtai. Xu said the trousers looked like those of a hospital patient, so he immediately put on a face mask.

The young man asked to go to a building site in Yizhuang, Dax-

ing District. During the journey, Xu's initial suspicions eased. "The boy didn't cough, he just sat quietly, I had thought SARS patients coughed all the time," he told *Beijing Today*.

They arrived at Yizhuang at 6:20 pm. As the passenger was not sure about the exact location, Xu took him to four different building sites, before questioning him further. The young man said he was from Sichuan Province and wanted to find his father. When Xu asked him why he had been at Changxindian, which is far from Yizhuang, he became evasive, but eventually told Xu he had been a SARS patient at Changxindian Hospital, but was now permitted to leave the hospital.

When Xu asked to see his re-

lease certificate, the youth handed him a piece of paper on which was written, "May you have a healthy body and a good job." When he told Xu that he had spent 20 days in the hospital and had run away because he missed his father, the driver's first thought was to flee himself.

"The longer I stayed with him, the greater the chance I would contract the disease," Xu said, "and even if I didn't, I faced being quarantined if it was learned that I had picked up a runaway SARS patient."

However, Xu eventually decided he should take the young man back to the hospital. "We are always talking about how individuals should not put their own wellbeing ahead of that of the community," he said.

Xu dialed the telephone number

written on the note, and after explaining the situation, was told to drive to Xiaocun Qiao and wait for an arrival of an ambulance. He did so, and locking the car doors, urged the youth to continue his treatment at the hospital.

Forty minutes later, an ambulance arrived and took Xu and his passenger to the hospital. As Xu showed no SARS symptoms after 24 hours, he was allowed to go to a quarantine room near his home in Fengtai district.

He remained in quarantine for 15 days and was released yesterday. During that time, his 12-year-old daughter delivered food to him every day.

"I just regard it as a holiday," Xu said, "But now I'm ready to end this holiday and go back to my car."

## How the Virus Came North

By Ema Ma

A business trip to Guangzhou in mid-February resulted in a young woman unwittingly carrying the deadly SARS virus to her home in Taiyuan, and then to Beijing. The woman, northern China's first recorded SARS patient, faxed her story to *China Youth Daily* on Wednesday last week.

Before her business trip to Guangdong in February, 27-year-old "Xu" had heard reports of a mysterious respiratory disease in the province.

Her mother, who worked for a local newspaper in Taiyuan, capital of Shanxi Province, contacted some journalist acquaintances in Guangdong, who assured her that reports about the disease were based on rumor, and that the situation was not that serious.

After searching the Internet, Xu's 53-year-old father told her that "atypical pneumonia" was not a serious form of pneumonia and not fatal.

Xu and her younger brother left for Guangzhou on February 18, taking with some *banlangen*, Chinese medicine for treating common cold.

On her arrival back in Taiyuan five days later, Xu had a fever and was running a temperature of 38.8. Doctors at three first-class hospitals in Taiyuan all told her she was simply suffering a bad cold.

By February 25, Xu's temperature was up to 40 degrees, but local doctors shrugged off suggestions of a link between her condition and severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS, when told of her recent visit to Guangdong.

On February 27, Xu's husband telephoned a hospital in Guangzhou, seeking information that might shed light on his wife's illness. He was told that SARS is caused by chlamydia (before the Corona virus was identified as the cause of SARS on April 16, some scientists had suggested chlamydia, a widespread sexually transmitted disease, was a possible pathogen). She was subsequently diagnosed with "typical pneumonia, not generally contagious."

The same day, Wei Dongguang, director of the respiratory clinic at Shanxi People's Hospital, ordered Xu be placed in intensive care, and that all medical staff wear face masks when treating her. Her condition, however, continued to deteriorate.

On February 28, Xu's husband decided she should seek treatment in Beijing when her condition continued to deteriorate.

Escorted by her mother and Wei Dongguang, Xu traveled by ambulance to Beijing's No. 301 Hospital of the People's Liberation Army, arriving in the early morning of March 1. Being a Saturday, she was placed temporarily in an emergency ward with three other patients.

Wei and two nurses at Shanxi People's Hospital were later diagnosed with SARS.

On March 3, Xu was transferred to No. 301 Hospital's respiratory ward. By then, her mother was also running a temperature.

The next day, Xu's physician-in-charge, She Danyang, told Xu and her family that Xu and her mother's symptoms matched those of SARS patients in Guangdong, and that they must be placed in isolation.

On March 5, Xu's father, who had been diagnosed in Taiyuan a few days before with bronchitis, was transferred to No. 301 Hospital. The family trio was then moved to No. 302 Hospital, which specializes in infectious diseases.

Within a matter of days, more than 10 surgeons and nurses from No. 302 Hospital were diagnosed with SARS. No. 301 Hospital also found SARS cases amongst its staff. When Tianjin reported its first SARS case one month later, it was found to be a former patient at No. 302 hospital.

While Xu's condition was gradually being brought under control, her father still coughed violently day and night.

On March 7, Xu and her mother were told that the father had to be transferred to another hospital. In fact, his conditioned had deteriorated to the point where a last-ditch effort was underway to save his life. Despite the doctors' efforts, he passed away a few days later.

When told that the father was to be transferred, Xu tried to comfort her mother, telling her it could not be too serious. Her mother responded that she "must consider the worst outcome. There is nothing that cannot be accepted if the worst situation has been considered." They were the last words Xu's mother spoke to her. On March 15, she, too, passed away.

And as the number of SARS patients at No. 302 Hospital proliferated day by day, Xu saw the then Minister of Health, Zhang Wenkang, reiterate on television that SARS was "under control."

March 15, Xu returned to Taiyuan. After a further week in quarantine, she left the hospital and went home on March 22.

On April 20, Zhang Wenkang and Beijing Mayor Meng Xuenong were removed from their posts for failing to deal with the spread of SARS and covering up the seriousness of the epidemic.



Photo by Zhuang Jian

## Coming Back to Beijing

By Su Wei

The 38-year-old design director of Beijing Elisa Decoration, Roberto Villanova, returned to Beijing as scheduled on May 8, though his family tried to persuade him to stay safely at his home in Treviso, Italy.

"I know what the real condition of SARS in Beijing is. I know I am safe in Beijing," he told them before leaving.

Villanova, who returned to Italy on April 21 on business, says people in Italy have no other source of information about the SARS situation in Beijing other than the Italian media. "But I know Beijing's situation through talking to my Chinese colleagues in Beijing."

After arriving at Beijing Capital International Airport, Villanova says he only took two minutes to pass through customs, "In the past, I used to wait for around 40 minutes. I hear some local people say that the SARS crisis would peak in early May, but I think as long as people pay attention to personal sanitation they would be less likely to catch SARS." He adds that he has never worn a face mask.

While his personal life remains almost unchanged, Villanova says SARS has had a negative effect on his company's business. "We have hardly any new clients, especially individual ones. Some projects with big clients, like real estate developers, have come to a temporary stop."

He says now he is setting up a website together with his Chinese colleagues, introducing the company's design works for furniture and house decoration on-line. "Clients can select designs without the need to come to our office," he said. "The website will also have a long term benefit for us. More people will know our designs. As the SARS situation in Beijing improves, the old clients would return to us and the new ones would be attracted after visiting our website."

## Transferring Patients Safely

By Su Wei

Emergency doctor of Beijing Emergency Medical Center, Zhao Liqiang, has been accompanying severely ill SARS patients as they are transferred to hospital since May 7 this year.

Zhao says transferring these patients is very different from transferring other emergency patients. "Speed is not a requirement for such transfers," he said. Putting on the four-layer protective clothing, three face masks, goggles and hat takes him around 40 minutes. "We then need to check all the equipment such as respirators and monitoring instruments before we set out."

Every day, around 14 severely ill SARS patients are transferred by the center. Each trip takes around four hours, on average.

Zhao says he first tells the patients that the hospital they are to be transferred to is better equipped to treat SARS patients.

He then urges the patients not to be nervous and to stay still. "I tell them to think that they are still lying in bed."

In the ambulance, he always sits by the patients and talks to them during the journey. "It is good for them to keep reasonably happy during the trip," he said.

He recalls one of his wards was a woman from the countryside near Beijing. Her husband died of SARS at the end of April and she was worried about who would look after her children if she died.

"I told her that the hospital she was being transferred to would cure her very soon and she might leave within ten days. Then I encouraged her to keep a strong will and be optimistic. I told her that she is past the most dangerous period for SARS patients, and that her children's biggest wish is to see a healthy mother again."

He says after they arrived at the hospital, the woman asked his name, and said "I will come back to see you when I am recovered."



Photo by Xu Jin



Photo by Zhang Rundong

## SARS Suspect Flees

By Lily Li

Faced with a medical bill for 200 yuan, Qiu Chuanyou, a 33-year-old suspected SARS patient with only five yuan in his pocket says he had no choice but to flee from the hospital.

Qiu was taken to Anzhen Hospital Monday morning after fainting while traveling on a public bus.

When a commotion broke out on the route 302 bus, a passenger told conductor Wang Yan that someone had collapsed near the back door. As panicked passengers converged on the front of the bus, trying to get as far away as possible from the "diseased" person lying unconscious on the floor, the driver stopped the bus and opened the doors. Although he urged them to wait for a doctor to arrive, the 60-odd passengers promptly fled.

When an ambulance arrived, only Qiu, who was now conscious again, the bus driver and the conductor remained. Registering a temperature of 38.5, Qiu was deemed a suspect SARS case and told he must wait for a quarantine ambulance.

The second ambulance arrived at 10:20 am and took him to Anzhen Hospital. When nurse Liu Chang asked Qiu to pay the transportation fee, in accordance with the regulations, Qiu said he had only five yuan, which he handed over.

Liu then took Qiu to the fever section, where he was told he would require x-rays, which would cost about 200 yuan.

Qiu told her he came from Sichuan and had no money for examinations. He also said he had no relatives in Beijing who could help him cover the fees. The nurse told him to wait outside while she registered another patient. But when she returned to find Qiu, he had disappeared.

As it happened, Qiu had mentioned to the nurse that he lived in Nangao. Some 400 people from local police stations and government offices were mobilized to search for Qiu, who was eventually found and brought back to the hospital on Tuesday evening.

Meanwhile the bus company posted signs at all 302 bus stops, calling on the passengers who had fled from the bus Qiu was on to go for medical examinations, for their own sake and that of others.

The driver and conductor of the bus were placed under home quarantine for 15 days from Monday.

At present, there are no detailed regulations in Beijing governing SARS examination and services fees, other than that hospitals cannot turn away patients and that people from low income families can receive treatment first and pay later.

In general, it costs 500 yuan for the examination and around 2,000 yuan to cover the cost of quarantine before SARS confirmation. However if patient is found not to have SARS, they must cover all the fees themselves.



# City to Heat Up Food Market, Eagerly

By Zhao Hongyi

With the city's hotels and restaurants struggling for business, the municipal commission of commerce is eager to help, promising to take action.

"First, we are persuading the owners of shopping venues to cut their leasing prices by half," said Gong Li, deputy director of the commission, at a press meeting held over the weekend.

The commission is designing sales promotions as well. The commission's spokesman, Yang Xinjing, told *Beijing Today* that the programs include a "Western Dishes Festival" which will be held during the June 1 Children's Day.

Another action is to issue health and disinfection certificates to the qualified restaurants and hotels. "We have to restore consumers' trust and confidence first," Yang said.

The commission is to organize evening food markets, as early as this weekend to rescue the sector which Yang warned was "on the verge of collapsing".

Hotels and restaurants in Beijing have experienced a dramatic business slide in April, with total revenue of just 830 million yuan. This was after an increase from last year of 32.8 percent in the first quarter which yielded a total revenue of 3.28 billion yuan. This month

the sector is believed to see another big loss. Local analysts estimate a full recovery will take at least a year.

But restaurant owners and operators have different feelings about the new policies to be promulgated, though they fully appreciate the local government's efforts.

Hu Xiaogun, general manager of "Tai-shuxi" restaurant chain, which provides typical Chinese cuisines, confirmed her appreciation in an interview with *Beijing Today*, but is cautious about how to get the most benefit from the policies.

"It depends on the conditions in each restaurant. For instance, we cannot serve

traditional Chinese dishes on the pavement which is too dusty and crowded with people." "But night markets are a good idea."

"As long as you have a high quality of food and service, and are careful about disinfection, your business will recover." Hu said her restaurants had received nearly the same amount of customers as usual over the past two weeks.

But Hu is concerned about the idea of health and disinfection licensing. "What I am worried about is that the inspection and licensing will become another chance for government agencies to levy charges on us."

## Millions of Jobs Lost Because of SARS

By Zhao Hongyi

While economists and the media are calculating the impact of SARS on China's economy, some economists are warning that its impact on the already serious unemployment situation is much more serious.

Mo Rong, vice president of the Institute of Labor Science and Studies, a think tank run by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, says the industries hardest hit by SARS are mostly the labor-intensive service sectors, such as hotels, restaurants and travel agencies. These play a far more important role in providing jobs than in contributing to GDP.

By the end of last year, the service sector provided 210 million jobs in China. The central government set a target of eight million new jobs in the sector this year.

"The problem is not only can we not fulfill the target; a similar number of jobs have actually been lost in this sector since the SARS outbreak."

Immigrant workers from rural areas and laid-off workers from state owned enterprises are suffering the most, and their situation is likely to get worse as another 2.12 million university graduates are set to enter the labor market this summer.

"It's a serious social problem which could become serious if we don't do something about it," he warned.

## China's Economy Has Its Own Momentum

By Zhao Hongyi

The US business community in Beijing has maintained an optimistic attitude about the SARS epidemic in the city, and the country. Michael Furst, executive director of the American Chamber of Commerce in China, told *Beijing Today* how US companies have reacted to SARS. Mr. Furst also gave us his views on the economic development prospects for China for the middle and long-term.

**Have any US-backed companies here shut down their offices or production?**

No, except the special case of Motorola, which shut down briefly after one of its workers came down with SARS.

**What's your view on the local economic recovery from SARS?**

The Chinese government is calling on people to return to normal business and life. But after two decades of development, China's economy, both in size and capacity, is no longer the one of twenty years ago. You cannot order people to do this and that. The only thing you can do is to create positive market conditions for business, like low interest rates, transparency, and rule of law.

Economy is a term that covers a broad range of activities, such as production, manufacturing, commerce, government spending, education and school training. SARS tells us that China needs to repair its once successful medical care network throughout the country. We should continue the expansion of production. But that does not cover all economic activities. The building up of a nationwide medical care network, education and government spending can all contribute to economic growth.

**What do you think are the critical points for a continuation of economic growth?**

China's economy has its own momentum. SARS can cause some interruption, but it won't put a stop.

Big countries used to concentrate on domestic development issues. But today, things are changing. You have to fully integrate to the world community if you want to find sustainable economic development.



Michael Furst, executive director of the American Chamber of Commerce in China  
Photo by Zhuang Jian

The 22 McDonald's stores in Chaoyang and Chongwen districts in Beijing began to sell food outdoors this week and 56 more outlets will follow suit soon.

Photo by Wang Zhenlong



## Restaurants Grab Customers by All Means

By Zhao Hongyi

Spicy shrimp is the most popular dish in the over fifty restaurants on "Gui Jie", a famous Chinese food street on Dongzhimen neidajie.

"We used to have 8,000 customers each day, but only dozens at the end of April because of SARS," Xu Yajun, chief of the Dongcheng Commercial Sub-Commission told *Beijing Today*.

Now, of the 50 restaurants on the street, 37 have reopened and the total number of customers is reaching 2,000 each day.

"Numbers are increasing," Xu said.

"The key point is to keep the food and environment clean and safe."

Mr Xu and his colleagues visit the restaurants several times every day, making sure they carry out disinfections daily. "So far, there have been no SARS cases on the street."

Restaurants are creating innovative means to provide food and services. For instance, delivery has proved popular in recent weeks.

Xiang Jun Fu is a popular restaurant providing Hunan cuisine in the city center. The restaurant is well known for its up-market clientele.

"Food delivery is no longer just

cheap packed rice and rubbish dishes," said Peng Wei, general manager of Xiang Jun Fu. Peng's restaurants are now providing home deliveries of shark fin soup, swallow nest porridge and sea cucumber dishes.

Peng also sends his chefs and waitresses to serve food at homes and office buildings at the request of his customers.

Other top restaurants are following. Quanjude, the Beijing Duck restaurant, "Hongbinlou", a centuries-old Muslim cuisine house and "Shaguoju", a ceramic pot food restaurant have all opened delivery hotlines.

## SARS Boosts Video Conferencing Market

By Ivy Zhang

While SARS in Beijing has been a disaster for some markets, it's been an unexpected bonus for others; for instance, the video conferencing market.

Beijing Telecom convened a SARS symposium this Tuesday via video conferencing system linking Beijing, Guangdong, Hong Kong and Taiwan. The system, named Galaxy, was provided by VTEL, a US-based video conferencing system provider.

"We receive about 30 calls and 10

inquiry emails everyday, four to five times the usual," said Cao Yanxin, marketing manager at VTEL.

"Because of SARS, people have a sense of crisis and turn to work through networking to avoid traveling around," she said.

Wang Lei, a student from Shanghai who is studying at the University of Durham in England, was one of the first to enjoy the benefits of VTEL's video system during the SARS outbreak. In late April, Wang was unable to go back to England, he took

the school's distance examination in the video conference room of VTEL's Shanghai office.

Since then, various official bodies and businesses have rented VTEL's videoconference rooms for distance recruitment, interviews and meetings.

However, Cao foresees that the market will return to normal after the SARS crisis calms down. "It won't keep growing this fast. After all, the domestic networking environment is not mature," she said.

## Guangdong Tourism Fights Back

Guangdong, May 28 – The tourism sector in Guangdong is trying to bounce back after the World Health Organization removed travel warnings since April 2 which devastated the province's tourism industry.

Travel agencies in the province are providing cut-price tours to Hong Kong, Macao and overseas.

The provincial tourism bureau is to subsidize travel agencies. The bureau has earmarked 400,000 yuan for each in-bound agency and 1 million yuan for every in and outbound business enterprise. Industry experts say other provinces, including Beijing, are preparing to follow suit. (Xinhua)



A Cathay Pacific ground crew member wears a surgical mask, as she stands in a deserted departure hall at Hong Kong's international airport.  
AP Photo

## Hong Kong Airport Authority Unveils Rescue Package

Hong Kong (AFP) – Hong Kong's Airport Authority unveiled a HK\$100 million (US\$12.84 million) SARS revitalization package to stimulate air traffic and bring tourists back to the city, two days after the World Health Organization lifted an economically devastating advisory against non-essential travel to Hong Kong.

Under the Recovery Stimulation Program, airlines that reinstate cancelled flights can enjoy a discount on landing charges.

The scheme will be introduced on June 1 and will run to the end of the year.

## Japanese Assistance Arrives

By Su Wei

A FedEx cargo plane full of Japanese aid for China's SARS relief efforts arrived at Beijing Capital International airport on Thursday.

The goods include protective clothing and medical instruments such as mobile X-ray machines, blood analysis machines, resuscitators and monitors.

"We have discussed the cooperation issue with the Japanese government since the end of April," said Wang Xinggen, deputy director general of the Department of International Trade and Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Commerce. "These goods are badly needed for SARS treatment in China."

## Singapore Calls for Wage Cuts

Singapore (AFP) – Singapore's national wages council (NWC) for the first time recommended wage cuts by companies directly hurt by the SARS fallout to allow them to weather the crisis and save jobs.

The council said the wage reductions would be implemented between July this year and June 2004.

Companies not directly affected by SARS are advised to continue to freeze wages.

The NWC said it expects unemployment to exceed 5.5 percent this year if the SARS epidemic is not contained.



A janitor at the Tao Chiang Nursing and Home Economics High School plays with a mask designed by students for a 'surgical mask beauty contest', in Taipei on May 26, 2003.  
Reuters Photo

## Taiwan Plans Economic Stimulus Package To Offset SARS

Taipei, May 27 (Dow Jones) – Taiwan is planning a three-year, NT\$300 billion public works package slated to begin next year to offset damage to the economy by the outbreak of SARS, an official said Tuesday this week.

The stimulus plan will be in addition to the more than NT\$200 billion in normal public works spending each year.

Commercial promotion activities, including trade shows, will also be increased.

The local authorities are also looking into ways to stimulate private investment. (Debra Boyce)

## HK Events to Boost Tourism

Hong Kong, May 28 – Hong Kong will stage mega events to attract visitors from the Chinese mainland and the rest of the world.

Projects include a Harbor Light and Sound Show, the creation of the Avenue of Stars, and beautification works in major tourist areas that are designed to provide new attractions for visitors. (Xinhua)



# Major Cultural Buildings to Cluster on Chang'an Avenue

By Sun Ming

Six major cultural facilities, parts of the Beijing Ten Large Cultural Buildings project, will be constructed along Chang'an Avenue over the next few years, according to an article in the *Beijing Morning Post* on Monday.

That reported stated that by the end of 2006, the Beijing government will invest 7.6 billion

yuan in facilities related to the culture industry and appoint 750,000 square meters for the ten buildings.

The six buildings slated for construction on Chang'an Avenue are the Capital Museum, Beijing Art Museum, Beijing International Press Center, Beijing Television Center, Beijing Broadcast Center, and Beijing Book Building. The other

four of the "Beijing ten large cultural buildings" are the Beijing Film Museum, Beijing Multimedia Information Center, Beijing Digital Press Information Center and Zhengyang Tower.

The overall project was first mentioned at a press conference held by the municipal government two months ago.

The Beijing International Press Center on western

Chang'an Avenue has been finished and the Capital Museum on the road's eastern end is in its final stages. Construction of the Beijing Television Center began in December last year and should be completed by the end of 2006. The Beijing Art Museum, Beijing Book Building and Beijing Broadcast Center are still in planning.

"The Beijing Art Museum,

which will be built next to the Beijing Musical Hall in the Xidan Area, will be no taller than 30 meters," said an employee of the Beijing Culture Bureau who requested anonymity.

That person explained that the height of Beijing Art Museum should match that of other buildings in the area near the Forbidden City. The museum will be finished by 2008.

Beijing University Professor Zhang Haixia and her son were among the thousands of people flying anti-SARS kites at the Badaling Great Wall on Saturday.

Photo by Su Guanming



## Thousands of Kites Give Flight to Hope

By Lisa Lee

The anti-SARS campaign took to the skies last Saturday when 10,000 kites were flown simultaneously at more than 10 spots citywide at 3 pm on Saturday.

Each kite was printed with the words "Chinese spirit" and "We will

definitely defeat SARS" in both English and Chinese.

The event was sponsored by several civil organizations that took charge of ordering the kites and distributing them to the public, free-of-charge.

Around half the kites took the sky

at the main venue, the Badaling Great Wall, while the rest were flown in such spaces as Yizhuang plaza, the South gate of Chaoyang Park, and the campuses of Peking, Renmin and eight other universities.

The organizers of the event will continue to distribute the kites until the

epidemic is completely brought under control and sponsor more mass kite flying every Saturday afternoon at venues around town, including the west gate of Olympic Stadium and the lawns in front of Beichen Road, You'an Menwai Avenue and the Haidian Exhibition Hall.

## Rape Victim Gives Birth

By Sun Ming

A young woman who was raped last summer gave birth to a baby in Beijing on Saturday and has received a great deal of aid from people moved by her story.

Yang Li, 19, a migrant worker from Anhui Province, was raped by two men on her way home late at night in August last year in Shijingshan District.

"I never told anyone and did not report the rape to the police. I just wanted to forget the whole thing forever," Yang told a reporter from *Beijing Youth Daily* last Friday. Three months after the crime, however, she discovered she was pregnant.

Yang said that she wanted to have an abortion, but couldn't afford the 3,000 yuan operation on her wages as a waitress. Afraid of distressing her parents, she decided not to return to her hometown, but to stay in Beijing.

"I had to let it be, but I planned to kill the baby as soon as it was born - I hate those rapists that much," she said. On Thursday last week, Yang went to the Beijing Tianchuang Law Firm to check whether she could lawfully kill her baby since it was conceived during a rape.

"I told her that it was definitely illegal to do so," lawyer Liu Changqing of that firm told *Beijing Today* on the phone, "But we didn't talk more that day, because she began to sweat heavily and her face went white."

Liu and his colleagues called an ambulance, which took Yang to the nearby Capital Steel Hospital, where she gave birth two days later.

Yang's sad story was reported by the local media on Friday last week and has drawn the attention of Beijingers of all walks of life.

"We have received many calls. People care about the health of Yang and her son very much," Mr. Zhang, an employee of the hospital's news office, told *Beijing Today*.

Zhang said that the young woman had received donations of over 5,000 yuan from local individuals and organizations before she left the hospital on Monday. Some callers even offered to adopt Yang's son. According to Zhang, the hospital did its part by not charging her for the delivery and her care.

"I hope someone will adopt my son," Yang said to a reporter from Beijing Times, "I didn't have the heart to kill him, but I have no way to raise him either."

A policeman from the Bajiao Police Station, who requested anonymity, told *Beijing Today* on Wednesday that the Shijingshan police have begun to investigate Yang's case.



Photo by Chen Bai

## Family Sues Local Government over Damage to Ancient Tree

By Chen Ying

Thursday last week, the Fengtai District People's Court began hearing the first lawsuit ever filed by an individual against the local forestry department for failing in its responsibility to protect one of Beijing's trees.

The family of plaintiff Zhang Yongshan, 60, has lived for centuries in a *hutong* near the Fengtai intersection, and formed a special bond with a date tree that has grown in their yard for nine generations. "There are many, many stories about the tree and my family," Zhang told *Beijing Today* on Wednesday. He added the tree used to produce over 500 kilograms of dates every year.

Knowing the government planned to reconstruct the area and demolish all existing buildings, Zhang decided to take action to protect the tree in April last year. He first had the tree tested for age, confirming it was 186 years old.

The Beijing Municipal Bureau of Forestry identified it as a grade-two ancient tree and assigned it serial number 11791. Zhang then signed an agreement with the Fengtai Bureau of Forestry to take charge of the tree's care.

Even after moving from his ancestral home, Zhang often visited the tree. He was devastated when he found several large backhoes around the tree on the afternoon of Friday, December 13 last year. Two-meter deep holes had been dug around the tree and the ancient date's main roots had been broken and exposed to the air.

After his discovery, Zhang immediately phoned the Fengtai Bureau of Forestry. "They told me they would come the next Monday," Zhang recalled, "But the tree couldn't wait."

He then contacted the Fengtai Parks Bu-

reau, which sent officials to the spot to stop the further destruction of the tree.

"After they heard staff from another department went to the site, some employees from the Fengtai Bureau of Forestry went there that Sunday morning," said Zhang.

The Forestry Bureau staff punished the construction company according to the Beijing Protection Management Ordinance for Ancient and Famous Trees and demanded the company take steps to protect the tree.

This March, the company restarted work around the tree with the approval of the bureau. Bureau spokesman Li Chunling said, "The bureau invited an expert to look at the tree, and he assessed it had recovered."

Zhang Yanwei, Zhang Yongshan's daughter, said, "As far as I know, that so-called expert has retired and his certification, as shown in court, did not bear an official seal. The tree obviously had far fewer leaves than in the past, but the expert said the tree had only been slightly harmed."

According to the Ancient and Famous Tree Management Methods for Urban Areas ordinance issued by the Ministry of Construction, the area inside the vertical projection of a protected tree's crown and the surrounding five-meter radius should not be touched. "Though the construction company has taken some action to protect the tree, it is not enough and does not meet the requirements," said Zhang Yanwei.

She continued, "It seems some employees of the forestry bureau are not clear about the ancient tree protection ordinance. We want to give them a lesson so they'll straighten out, and if we lose the case, we'll take it to a higher court."

## Customs Catches Impostor on Way to Britain

By Sun Ming

A young woman posing as her aunt in order to travel abroad was stopped at the customs counter of Beijing Capital International Airport on Saturday afternoon.

Wei Li (pseudonym), 17, from Shenyang, Liaoning Province, stole her aunt's passport and planned to use it to illegally immigrate to the UK. When she got to the airport, she put on a large mask, trying to take advantage of SARS to more easily pass through customs.

However, a customs officer saw through her ruse, even though she wore a dark business suit to appear older.

That officer, Jia Ming, said that after he checked Wei's passport, boarding card and alien registration card, he asked her to take off the mask. Wei did, but put it back on again very quickly.

"Even though I just got a quick glance, I realized she might be not the owner of the passport, which said she should be 33," Jia told *Beijing Today* on Wednesday.

He continued, "She looked very young and pretty nervous. Also, I found she had a mole near her right eyebrow, but the person in the picture had a mole directly in the middle of her eyebrows."

Wei claimed she has been studying at Cambridge University for two years, but was unable to answer simple questions Jia asked her in English.

Later, in the customs office in the airport, Wei admitted the passport belonged to her aunt, who had recently returned from England to visit her family in Shenyang.

Wei, currently unemployed, said she had quarreled with her parents a few days before, and then got the idea to leave home and try to make it on her own. After stealing her aunt's passport and 5,000 yuan from her parents, Wei spent 4,800 yuan to buy a plane ticket to London.

The airport customs office said that Wei was fined 2,000 yuan for her act and released.

## Zoo Animals Benefit from Home Improvement

By Su Wei

Over 100 animal residents of the Beijing Zoo were moved last Thursday into new homes that more closely imitate their natural habitats and offer a more pleasing experience for visitors.

The renovated flamingo pen has an area of over 800 square meters, twice the size of the former space. Over 1 million yuan was invested in improving the pen, which now contains piles of red clay soil, which the birds can use to build their own nests, and over 200 plants such as bamboo and orchids.

"The plants not only improve the space for the birds, but also make it more attractive to visitors," said Ye Mingxia of the zoo's publicity office. "The renovated pen was designed to imitate the wet conditions in which flamingoes prefer to live in the wild."

Previously separated areas of the zoo have been remodeled and connected to form the 20,000 square meter African Animal Area, home to around 100 species from around the African continent. In this expansive open zone, giraffes, zebras, ostriches, antelopes, gnus and other animals can come and go as they please. "Now the African animals can live more naturally and behave more naturally," said Ye.



A flock of flamingoes frolic in their new digs at the Beijing Zoo.

Photo by Zhang Ke



# Foreign Firms Enter Securities Market

By Tony Shaw

UBS Warburg and Nomura Securities have become China's first qualified foreign institutional investors (QFII) to invest in the country's securities market, following approval by the China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) on Monday.

The news came after China had issued a regulation guideline on the QFII scheme in November 2002 and formally adopted it at the end of last year. China approved three foreign banks – HSBC, Citibank and Chartered Bank

– and five Chinese banks to be the first group of QFII custodial banks this February, and UBS Warburg and Nomura chose Citibank Shanghai Branch as their exclusive custodial bank.

UBS Warburg said it hopes to trade A-share stocks, government securities and convertible debts in the coming few weeks, with investment volume of more than US\$50 million. They also intend to choose 50 Chinese A-share listed companies for their research list by the end of this year.

Nomura public relations spokes-

person Clifford Levy said the company would apply to the authorities for approval to invest \$50 million in China's stock market. He said this relatively small investment does not represent any concerns about the Chinese market.

More QFII applications from overseas institutions, such as Deutsche Bank and Goldman Sachs, are in the queue for a QFII license. According to the QFII criteria, overseas companies in fields of fund management, insurance and trust, and governmental insti-

tutions are eligible to become QFIIs.

Stock analysts say the entry of QFIIs will help the Chinese stock market to become mature and set a model for China's small and medium-sized investors. *Guangdong-Hong Kong Information Daily* said Wednesday that QFII would drive most Chinese investors to pay attention to Chinese listed companies' real performance rather than simply their share price, so the QFII system will force these companies to intensify corporate governance and improve transparency.

## Unicom, Mobile Sue Local Bureau

By Di Duohuo / Shan Jinliang

In the tiny city of Baiyin in Gansu Province, China's first lawsuit against an official penalty for excessive telecom charges was launched last week.

The Baiyin District Court heard the case filed by the Baiyin subsidiaries of China Unicom and Mobile against Baiyin Bureau of Quality and Technological Supervision on May 20. The bureau fined the two companies 1,000 yuan each and requisitioned their "illegal income" for the last six months of 313,8000 yuan and 438,700 yuan respectively. In the lawsuit, both Unicom and Mobile said they had applied for administrative re-handling of the case but had received no response by the due legal date.

### Lawful punishment?

The administrative penalty imposed by the bureau on September 30, 2002 said, "Following complaints from consumers in early 2002, and entrusted by the bureau, Gansu Provincial Measuring and Testing Research Institute checked mobile phone time measuring facilities. The checks were conducted on June 17, 2002, and they found the two companies were overcharging mobile phone users, so the bureau laid down the penalty according to China's Measurement Law and provincial measurement regulations.

However, China Unicom said the checks had not been done properly and that the test results were invalid. It also said the penalties went against the No. 463 File regulation instituted in 2002 by the Ministry of Information Industry.



Photo by Photocomme

### Revenue vs. market principles

A senior Unicom official who requested anonymity told *China Youth Daily* Tuesday, "In the name of safeguarding the interests of consumers, the bureau is supposed to supervise our business but they wanted to charge us for the checks." The bureau's director Chen Xiaoyang rejected this claim.

When the plaintiff said that the No. 463 File stipulated that telecom time measurement should not be undertaken by the bureau, the bureau's attorney Zeng Mingqiang said the file did not apply to this case since it was released in October, which was after the penalty was issued in September.



Photo by Ynet

# US-China Banking Bust-Up

By Shan Jinliang

US venture capital bank Newbridge Capital Group has filed a lawsuit against Taiwan-based Chinatrust Commercial Bank, claiming it tried to scupper Newbridge's proposed takeover of Shenzhen Development Bank (SDB).

Newbridge signed an exclusive contract with SDB last June to become its main shareholder, a move which would have been a breakthrough in China's banking industry which has long placed barriers against outside investors. But this landmark deal has become embroiled in rumor and mistrust following a year of negotiations and now this lawsuit.

### Long talks, few achievements

SDB was established by local companies in 1987 in Shenzhen, and was seen as a frontrunner in China's opening up policy. It was also the first bank to be listed in the domestic stock market. The bank's profits have grown steadily in the past few years, and branches have been opened in 19 Chinese cities. Since the top three shareholders hold less than 10 percent each, it is the only Chinese bank that could be taken over by a foreign investor, as China has set an investment ceiling of 25 percent for overseas investors. Therefore, it was regarded as an

ideal investment target by foreign investors.

In June 2002, Newbridge began talks with SDB and it received approval to proceed from the government in September. A transitional management committee was established in October, and eight senior managers entered SDB in top posts from finance to risk control. Newbridge thought the deal was as good as done.

According to the agreement, the temporary committee was supposed to expire in 90 days, but it was still working after the scheduled date. A Newbridge official statement this February said the two sides had agreed on a purchase price, but rumors started to circulate that new buyers, even including a Xinjiang company, were getting ready to replace Newbridge.

### Why did the talks founder?

On May 12, SDB suddenly announced it was pulling the plug on the deal. Newbridge immediately issued a statement, saying it expected the Shenzhen government to honor its obligations under the binding contract the two sides had signed.

Newbridge filed a lawsuit on May 20 in a court in Texas, where Chinatrust has a subsidiary, claiming damages from Chinatrust for allegedly plotting

to kill the deal by misleading mainland authorities about Newbridge's intentions. Newbridge claims Chinatrust convinced the authorities that it merely intended to resell the bank for a quick profit.

Chinese media analysts have also expressed doubts about Newbridge's intentions. "Newbridge is not a banking operator but a capital operator," said an analyst of Xiangcai Securities who requested anonymity. "The deal will not help SDB to upgrade its business or internationalize itself," he said. Others attribute the collapse of the deal to the local government, saying it wants to control the bank in order to offer preferential policies to local companies.

### What, us?

Chinatrust, the largest private bank in Taiwan, had already expressed its desire and ability to enter the mainland market, and it established its Beijing representative office this March, its fifth branch in China.

Lin Shiaw-pin, a Chinatrust spokesman, said the bank would never consider undertaking the clandestine activities it had been accused of. He also said the bank faced numerous "regulatory constraints" for any investment in the mainland.

soon clamped down on by the Chinese TV administrative authorities because of its breach of regulations by introducing Taiwanese TV. Sun TV's air ban in the mainland was not lifted until April this year.

Global China (Beijing) Media Consultancy Company president Zhao Xiaobing said Sun TV is following the route of Phoenix TV by showing its programs to millions of ordinary Chinese families. "Phoenix TV is far from rich compared with the other 30 overseas TV stations airing in China," said Zhao, "but it could get official approval to reach 40 million families and thus make high profits from ads for Chinese mainland companies." Zhao added that only by following the Phoenix model could Sun TV make profits.

Both Chinese and overseas media have pointed out that Stellar Media's boss Tan Hui is an influential figure with close ties in the government, suggesting an ability to help Sun TV to air in mainland cities.

## International Banking Body Set Up

By Lily Li

China Banking Regulatory Commission (CBRC) plans to set up a non-profit international advisory committee to provide advice from famous overseas experts in the industry, a CBRC spokesman said last Friday.

The advisory committee will invite experienced people with supervisory roles in internationally renowned banks to be its members to offer advice on banking regulations and long-term strategies for the regulator, and provide suggestions on the construction and development of the country's banking regulatory system.

The CBRC was created earlier this year by the National People's Congress, the country's law-making body, to take over the supervisory role of the People's Bank of China, the country's central bank, and assume control over regulation of national banking operations. Its establishment marked the final installment of China's regulatory institutions in the three major financial sectors of securities, insurance and banking for improving the country's macro economic functions and management of potential financial risks.

## Individual Domain Names Up for Grabs

By Shan Jinliang

A policy allowing domain names to be registered by Chinese individuals will come out this year, according to China Network Information Center (CNNIC). A questionnaire has been released to collect public opinion before the policy is issued.

CNNIC Office Director Liu Zhiqiang told *Beijing Today* that the existing China Internet Domain Names Regulations forbid the registration of domain names by individuals. But with the rising demand for individual domain names, the Ministry of Information Industry decided to amend the regulations and lift the ban last October.

Liu said the ministry had just authorized CNNIC to outline detailed rules for individual domain name registration, and legal experts from related fields including the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences have been invited to discuss the rules.

CNNIC has released a questionnaire on this issue and hopes to invite public opinions as a reference for the rules.

China officially opened domain name registration to organizations on March 17, and over 280,000 domain names had been registered by the end of last month.

## Yao Ming Spits Out Coke

By Hou Mingxin

No more Mr. Nice seven foot five guy. Basketball behemoth Yao Ming shed his cuddly image after his attorney delivered a bill of indictment to a local court in Shanghai last Saturday. The Chinese NBA star has decided to rough-tackle soft drink giant Coca-Cola for infringing his image rights by printing his photo on its products.

In the bill, Yao required that Coca-Cola promptly stop using his name and image. He's also demanded a public apology and payment of a derisory one yuan in compensation.

Last week, *Beijing Today* reported that Coca-Cola had cleverly signed a three-year contract with the Chinese National Men's Basketball Team, allowing them to use group images of the team's players for commercial use. Pepsi, Coca-Cola's global competitor, had already scooped what they thought were exclusive rights to Yao with a three-year contract, after the new star set a billion more tongues wagging during his first season in the NBA this year.

But on the latest packages of its drinks, Coca-Cola painted a three-man photo of Yao Ming, Menk Bate'er and Guo Shiqiang wearing Chinese national team shirts.

Yao protested last week, and issued an official statement on May 15 telling Coca-Cola to cut it out and stop using his name and image.

Coca-Cola's response was that the contract between them and the Chinese National Men's Basketball Team allowed them to use the group image of the Chinese team, and Yao isn't alone in the photo.

In the indictment, Yao said his civil rights had been infringed on. Legal experts say that athletes' image ownership rights are still a blank field of law. Coca-Cola has not yet responded to Yao's accusation.



Ikea's Beijing branch started to cut prices from last Friday for a three-week promotion period, with about 500 products on the discount list and a price reduction ranging from 10 to 80 percent.

Photo by Che Qingjiu



By Su Wei

Song Song, 9, was not a particularly naughty boy. He used to run on roller skates in his community despite the danger from passing cars and bicycles. He also used to jump over a one-meter-high platform in front his apartment building. His parents had always been concerned about his safety. Now he won't cause them any more anguish. He died last year in a simple accident.

Last summer when Song Song went to see his relatives in Changping, near Beijing, he was excited to see some sparrows had built their nest in a tree. He wanted to catch one so he climbed up the tree, holding a long bamboo stick with an iron hook on the end. When he got to the top, he stretched and waved the stick. He got hold of the nest but suddenly he lost balance and fell.

He fell on the hook, which injured his head. After a six-hour operation in a nearby hospital, Song Song's heart stopped beating.

#### Common problem

Research conducted by Tongji University and released last year found that among 43,000 children aged below 14 in 11 cities around China, over 24 percent suffered injuries in accidents. More than three percent were handicapped as a result.

According to the Center for Children's Accidental Injuries Prevention and Treatment, injuries in accidents are the prime reason for death among children aged below 14. Every year around 90,000 children die from injuries sustained in accidents, over 26% of the total number of child deaths in China. The percentage has been rising annually by 10 percent in recent years. In contrast, in the past five years, the child death rate from epidemic disease has dropped by 54 percent.

#### Didn't see the danger

Early this year, the media in Beijing reported that a female middle school student was hit by a car while riding to school and died on the spot.

At the end of last year, a primary school student in Shanghai was knocked down by a taxi while crossing a road. He still hasn't regained consciousness.

In the middle of 2001, twin boys from a primary school in Lujiang County, Anhui Province were knocked down by a truck while riding home. A few days later, another primary school student in the same county died after being knocked down by a truck while riding to school. The county government says every year over 30 primary

# Accidents

# Kill



Careful now...

Photo by photocom

students are injured or killed in traffic accidents while riding their bicycles.

Li Han, 10, a boy from Xicheng District, Beijing, drowned during a summer vacation three years ago. He had a cramp in his leg while swimming with his friends and they were too late to save him.

Last August, three children drowned within thirty days at Shekou Bathing Beach in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province.

In June 2001, a twelve-year-old girl in Lujiang County, Anhui Province, slipped into a river and drowned after she had been playing by the riverside. The county government says every year at least 40 children die by drowning.

According to the Ministry of Health, traffic accidents and drowning are the main two killers of children.

#### Children's awareness

In a recent research study conducted by Jinan University medical school among 1,423 primary and middle school students in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, around 31% of the students said they never thought about the possibility of getting injured while playing. More than 50% said they didn't think there was any need to take protective measures such as wearing safety hats.

In a survey conducted by Beijing Diseases Prevention and Control Center last summer among more than 9,200 Beijing primary and middle school students, more than 15% said they were used to picking up their classmates or friends by bicycle.

Nine percent said they didn't stop for red lights. None of the students expressed any fear of traffic accidents.

Yao Yao, one of the few primary school students interviewed by *Beijing Today* to admit that he was concerned about safety, started a fire in his home before the May Day holiday this year. He recalled that when he poured in the oil to make fried eggs, a fire suddenly flared up in the pot. "I tried to move the pot away. But it was so hot." Having no idea what to do, he hurried away from the kitchen, locked the

door and hid in his room. Smoke was detected by the neighbors and the fire was put out by fire fighters. Yao later said he was afraid that his mother would scold him. "Each time when I do something wrong, she treats me in that way," he murmured. "I just did not want to be humiliated."

#### Parents fault?

In Shanghai, 52% of accidental injuries to children take place at home and many are judged to be the result of parental negligence. Chen Bowen, researcher of the Capital Institution of Pediatrics says the percentage is almost the same in Beijing.

Liu Kai, 7, lost his left leg two years ago after an accident in a rural area of Beijing when he had run across the street to fetch his ball. At that moment, his parents, restaurant owners, were busy serving food. "We were blamed for being only concerned with making money and ignoring the safety of our son," said the 29-year old mother. "We would look after him all day but we cannot. Otherwise how can we make a living to raise him? We would all go hungry."

In her opinion, the local district should take more responsibility for her son's injury. "The local government only understands that the more roads built, the more the economy develops. Have they ever thought of the safety of the children? There is no place for them to play or protective bars to prevent children crossing roads."

When Zhang Rui and her husband had to go out to work during the summer vacation last year, they always told their son not to go out. "But one day his classmates called him to play by the riverside of Gaoliang River and he went." Her son drowned that morning.

He Zhongjie, head of the emergency department of Beijing No.304 Hospital told *Beijing Today* that during the Spring Festival this year, around 20 children came to the hospital with injuries. "I asked the parents how the injuries happened. Their answer was always the same — the children were just playing."

He says one patient was a one-year-old baby with head burns. "The child had fallen while learning to walk. The mother tried to support her son but she forgot that she had a bowl of hot soup in her hands." The soup spilled on the baby. "In fact the baby was not hurt by the fall at all," he said.

"I never realized that my son could drown in a bathtub," cried Wang Mingxia, mother of a two-year-old child. "I am so stupid." Last month, Jia Le fell into a bathtub at home while Wang was preparing a meal. "The doctor told me if I had found him one minute later, I would have lost him for ever."

Jia was rescued and is now recovering though the mother said that he becomes irritated more easily these days. Wang says she is to enroll in a class set up by the Rescue Department of Beijing Red Cross to learn emergency rescue skills. "It seems parents cannot realize the need to learn such skills and knowledge to prevent accidental injuries to their children until such accidents actually happen or there are some relevant media reports," says Li Fuxing, director of the department.

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# Should the Insurer Pay Up?

By Ivy Zhang

A man who bought a three million yuan life insurance policy died ten hours after he finished the medical examination required by the insurer. Unfortunately, there was one remaining step he hadn't completed in order to seal the policy. So his mother, the beneficiary, had to go to court to claim the full payout.

The case closed last week at Tianhe District People's Court in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. The insurer, CITIC Prudential Insurance Company, a joint venture set up between China International Trust Investment Company and the renowned Prudential Insurance Company from Britain in 2000, lost the case and is now set to appeal to a higher court.

It is the biggest legal case involving life insurance in China so far.

## Controversy

Xie Xingquan, the policyholder, was a single man about 30 years old who owned a private pharmacy in Guangzhou.

He signed up for a life insurance product named Unit Link plus five additional policies with Huang Hanyao, the insurance agent from CITIC-Prudential on October 5, 2001.

The next day, Xie paid an initial premium of about 2,000 yuan based on Huang's suggestions and calculations. Huang then gave Xie a receipt.

Xie underwent the medical examination at Guangdong Dongshan District People's Hospital in the afternoon of October 17. He was killed in an accident in a restaurant at 1 am the next day.

On October 18, the insurer, after receiving the medical examination report, asked Huang to notify Xie to present his financial credentials. When Huang tried to reach Xie, she learned that Xie was dead. She told Xie's family about his insurance policy.

On November 13, Sun Xiao, Xie's mother and the beneficiary, applied to the insurer for compensation and presented Xie's outstanding financial credentials.

About two months later, the insurer sent a letter to Sun on January 14, 2002 saying they agreed to pay one million yuan based on the main Unit Link insurance but refused to pay the two million yuan covered in the additional long-term personal accident insurance policies.

Sun received one million yuan from the insurer the next day but she decided to sue to claim the other two million on July 16.

## Insurer's responsibility?

CITIC-Prudential faxed *Beijing Today* a press release this Tuesday. It says the insurer believed that the insurance contract signed between Xie and the insurer is invalid.

"The policy holder failed to provide financial credentials and failed in the medical examination. As a result, the insurer can not complete the review of his insurance application," claimed the insurer.

CITIC-Prudential said they issued a notice in writing on October 10, 2001, to Xie requesting him to provide financial details and undergo a medical examination within 10 days. Otherwise, his application would be cancelled and his prepaid premium would be returned to him. Xie had the medical check but failed to provide the financial proofs on due time.

"We believe the insurance contract did not take effect and the insurance company does not bear any insurance responsibility," said the company.

The one million yuan the insurer paid to Xie's family is a payment "out of sympathy for our potential customer," according to the insurer.

But Xie's lawyer disputes that version. Xi Hong, a lawyer from Guangdong Desai Law Firm, told *Beijing Today* that China's Insurance Law says that when ini-

tial premium payment is made, the contract takes effect. The policyholder has reason to believe that as long as the initial premium is paid, the contract is valid.

Xi insisted Xie passed the medical examination and the insurer's accusation about Xie's failure in the medical examination relates to additional long-term hospital insurance which is not relevant to this case. "The medical examination result said that Xie was fine apart from being a bit overweight, which meant he had to pay another 18.7 yuan in the premium for additional hospital insurance. But that is not applicable to the two insurance policies in this dispute."

## Dispute over two million yuan

The insurance company already paid Xie's family one million yuan out of the main Unit Link insurance. The dispute focuses on the two million yuan in the additional long-term personal accident insurance.

The insurer defended itself by saying "articles in the main insurance contract and those in the additional contract separately set conditions for insurance acceptance. These two are quite different."

"As the company does not accept the insurance, the additional contract for long-term personal accident insurance is invalid," claimed the insurer.

However, Xi Hong pointed out that it is clearly indicated in the additional contract "the insurance period shall be the same as the payment period." And the initial premium paid by Xie covers the premium of the additional long-term personal accident insurance.

"Generally speaking, when the main contract is valid, the additional one is valid too. They are bound together," said Xi.

The court concluded that the wording of an article in the additional insurance contract was not clear. It reads: "the responsibility starts after the policyholder pays the initial premium and the company agrees to accept the insurance."

"When does the company agree? In what way? The statement is unclear and indefinite. In this case the law favors the policyholder Xie Xingquan. The contract had taken effect," read the verdict.

## What lessons to draw?

The question of whether payment automatically makes the contract valid has troubled the Chinese insurance industry for a long time. This is not the first case.

"In the past, cases were rather small," said Professor Hao, director of the Insurance Department of the Central University of Finance and Economics. "And whenever an individual proposed to sue an insurer, the insurer usually chose to compensate in consideration of its image."

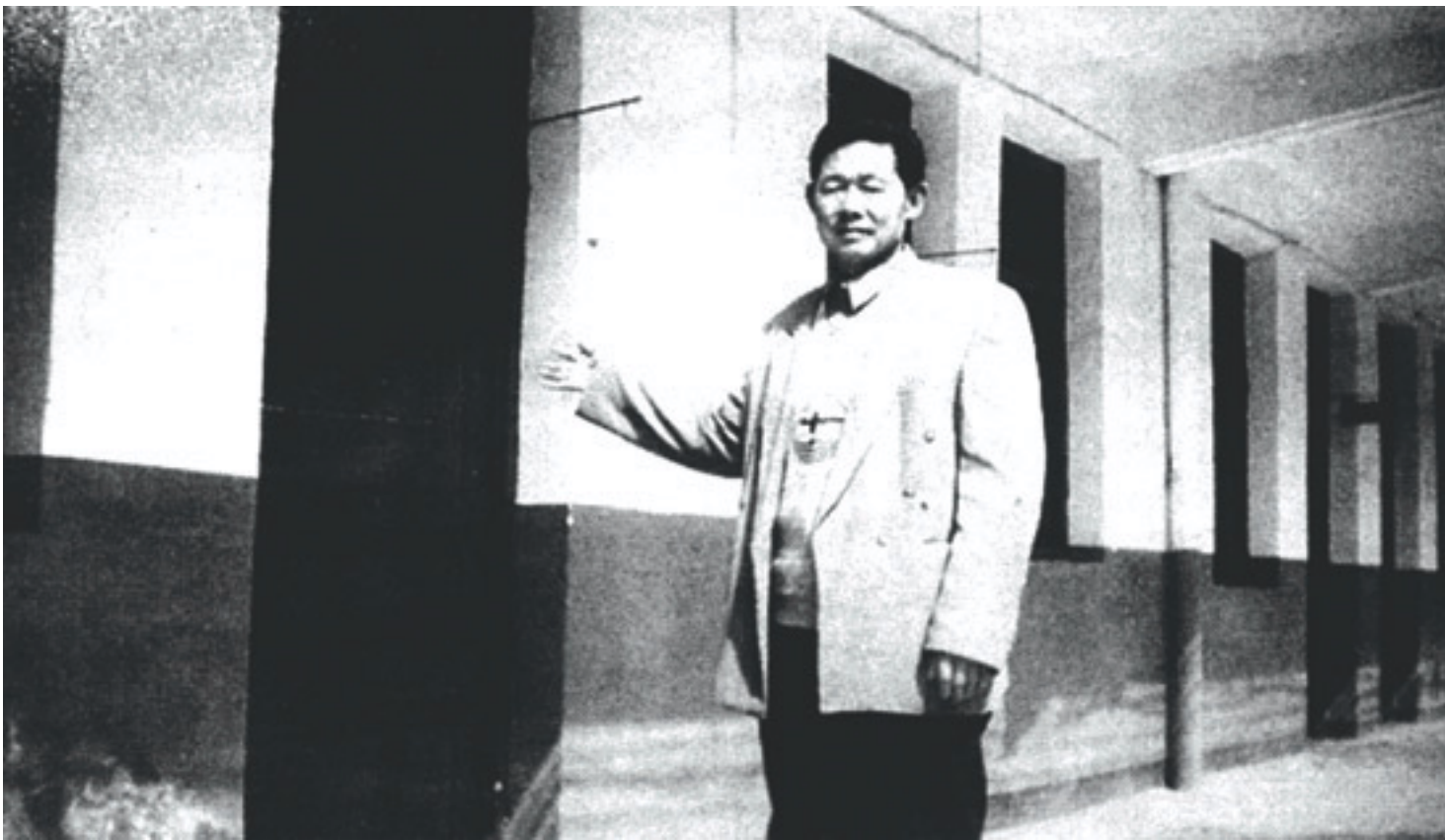
"But in this case, the expected compensation is huge," added Hao.

"Taking the contractual signing as a precondition for the validity of a contract is essential in contract law. But under some circumstances, payment can also be a precondition," said Hao.

The process for many insurers, either from home or abroad, is that applicants fill in the insurance proposal, make payment, undergo medical examination, get an insurance review and then their policy is issued.

To avoid disputes, some insurers have adjusted the process, putting medical examination ahead of making payment. And some insurers have introduced temporary insurance, provisional coverage extended before the official issuance of a policy.

Loopholes also exist in the insurer's contract. "Insurance is an intangible product. Everything is subject to the contract. Thus the wording in the contract needs to be thorough and clear," said Hao.



Liu points to his old office.

# Was Liu Framed?

By Zeng Pengyu / Sun Ming

*Beijing Youth Daily* revealed on Tuesday that a murder case in Hubei Province, which caused a great sensation throughout the country four years ago, had been found to be groundless.

The defendant Liu Xinghai, 53, the head of a bureau in Hong'an County, Hubei Province, was found guilty of conspiring to kill his immediate boss in 1998 and he was sentenced to one year in prison in 1999. At the time, Liu was viewed as a typical corrupt official in China.

However, Liu was found not guilty in October last year. On the contrary, the supposed victim, Liu's immediate boss, is now suspected of having framed him.

But the startling result wasn't published at once. On April 14 this year, half a year after Liu was pronounced not guilty, *Wuhan Evening News*, a local newspaper in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei Province, reported the redress of Liu's grievance for the first time. However the news was suppressed at once and it didn't spread outside Hubei Province.

On Tuesday, *Beijing Youth Daily* published Liu's case, and it was soon picked up by the media all over the country.

## Did Liu want to kill Tu?

Liu Xinghai was accused of conspiring to murder and arrested by Hong'an police in June 1998. At that time, he was the deputy director of Hong'an County Commercial and Industrial Bureau.

According to the police's case against Liu in 1998, Liu had suggested transferring Cheng Bin (pseudonym), the wife of a boss of a local insurance company, to his bureau at a meeting in February 1998. But Liu's proposal was turned down. Liu suspected that it was Tu Shengguo, 50, the director of the bureau, who had obstructed his proposal. So he quarreled with Tu after the meeting.

The police report reads, "On May 24, 1998, Liu invited Peng Xiansheng (pseudonym), Cheng Bin's husband, to his home. Liu asked Peng to knock Tu unconscious and throw him into Nanmen Lake. Liu gave Peng 1,000 yuan in advance as a reward and promised Peng to transfer his wife to the bureau. However, Peng decided to reveal the whole plot to Tu and handed over the money. Tu then reported the case to Hong'an County Public and Security Bureau."

Hong'an County People's Court opened the trial of Liu's case in August 1998. In the court, Hong'an police showed a receipt of 1,000 yuan as the main evidence against Liu. Peng and Tu also provided testimony in the court. Liu was sentenced to two years in prison in August 1998.

Liu then appealed to a higher court. In April 1999, Huangang Municipal Intermediate People's Court changed the original sentence to one year. In June 1999, Liu was released after serving the full term of the sentence.

## Convict battles to clear his name

After his release, Liu, who had always protested his innocence, continued to appeal to Hubei Province Supreme Court and reported his case to Hubei Province Political and Law Commission.

"I really didn't expect that Tu would

frame me like that," said Liu to a reporter from *Beijing Youth Daily*. "I was shocked when police took me away from my office on June 24, 1998."

Liu said that Hong'an County Discipline Committee investigated Tu's financial problems in 1997 and Tu thought it was Liu who had reported his financial problems to the committee. From then on, the two guys couldn't get along with each other.

"Hong'an police said that Peng had a cassette recorder which had recorded our conversation when we talked about planning to murder Tu. In the court, I asked them to play the record, but they made an excuse that the cassette had been affected by damp. But they couldn't play the tape, because I never talked with Peng about murder," said Liu angrily.

At the request of Hubei Province Supreme Court, Huangang Municipal Intermediate People's Court retried Liu's case in October 1999, but the court rejected Liu's appeal in December that year. In February 2000, Liu appealed to Hubei Province Supreme Court a second time, and in November 2000 the court ordered Huangang Municipal Intermediate People's Court to retry the case. In April 2001, Huangang Municipal Intermediate People's Court rejected Liu's appeal. In the same month, Liu appealed to Hubei Province Supreme Court for a third time.

"My only idea in those years was just to continue appealing. I admitted that Tu and I didn't get along, but that doesn't mean I wanted to kill him," Liu told *Beijing Youth Daily*.

In April 2001, Hubei Province Supreme Court set up a collegiate bench to look into Liu's case. After one year's arraignment, in May 2002 the court ruled that the evidence against Liu was insufficient. The court repealed the judgments of Hong'an County People's Court and Huangang Municipal Intermediate People's Court and ordered Hong'an County People's Court to retry Liu's case.

"The only convincing evidence against Liu was Peng's fake testimony," said *Beijing Youth Daily* on Tuesday.

In October 2002, the court pronounced Liu not guilty on grounds of lack of convincing evidence.

## Written record reveals plot

During the process of redressing Liu's grievance, a written record played a key role. It records a private meeting attended by Liu, Peng, and three employees from the Hong'an County Government in January 8, 2000.

"In January 2000, Peng accompanied by his mother came to my home to apologize. Three of my friends were just visiting me that day, so I asked them to be witnesses," Peng explained the origin of the written record to *Beijing Youth Daily*.

A reporter from Wuhan Evening News, which reported Liu's grievance exclusively in April this year, confirmed the truth of the written report with the three witnesses. Liu faxed the written record to *Beijing Youth Daily* on Sunday.

"I'm deeply sorry to deputy director Liu. The whole event was handled by Tu Shengguo who asked me to defame Liu," said

Peng at the private meeting. "I did so because Tu promised to provide my wife with a position in his bureau."

Tu told Peng that the best way to malign Liu was to convince police that Liu intended to murder him. At the request of Tu, in June 1998 Peng, who carried a cassette recorder, tried to lure Liu into expressing the idea of killing Tu. But Liu didn't. Peng then borrowed 1,000 yuan from Liu and wrote a receipt on the spot.

"That was all Tu's idea," said Peng, "I handed over the cash and the receipt which had Liu's signature to Tu. And then he reported the case to police at once. The whole case was a fraud."

*Beijing Youth Daily* said that Hubei Province Supreme Court keeps refusing to accept interviews from the media to talk about the case. On Friday last week, the newspaper contacted Wu Chengming, the chief judge who took charge of the retrial of Liu's case in Hong'an County People's Court.

"During the retrial, we found that the evidence from several years ago was not convincing, and some of it even conflicted. So we changed the original judgment," said Wu. But when asked why the court ruled Liu was guilty without having sufficient evidence, Wu refused to explain and just said that he hadn't been part of the trial in 1998.

## Victim gives up case against accuser

Up to now, Tu Shengguo hasn't received any punishment. He resigned from his position as the director of Hong'an County Commercial and Industrial Bureau in 2001 and is now an ordinary employee of the bureau.

"But he rarely shows up in the bureau," an unnamed employee from the bureau told *Beijing Youth Daily*.

Wu Chengming, the judge from Hong'an County People's Court, told *Beijing Youth Daily* that Liu hadn't yet brought a law suit against Tu.

"Liu's not guilty judgment doesn't mean that Tu committed libel," said Wu. "If he wants Liu to be prosecuted for the criminal liability, he should sue him."

*Beijing Youth Daily* said on Tuesday that Liu had considered pursuing Tu, but many people in Hong'an County persuaded him against doing so.

"I know that my case also involved other people and I understand why some people didn't want me to bring a lawsuit against Tu. My case is much more complicated than it seems." Liu told a reporter from *Beijing Youth Daily* that he doesn't want to get into trouble anymore. "Anyway, I was rehabilitated. I'm eager to live a peaceful life."

In November last year, Liu returned to his original position as the deputy director of Hong'an Commercial and Industrial Bureau, and his membership of the Chinese Communist Party was restored. Liu will also be paid the salary he should have received from 1998 to 2002.

However, Tu Shengguo insisted that what Liu said was all lies. "The court found him not guilty for some special reason. It's a conspiracy," Tu angrily told *Beijing Youth Daily*. But he couldn't present any evidence to prove his words.





# Hot for the Press

By Zhao Pu

Feng Haidong loves newspapers, not only as an enthusiastic reader, but also as a devoted amateur reporter. His favorite pastime is calling up local newspapers with ideas for stories. "Contributing to newspapers has enriched my daily life," he says. "It has grown from a simple interest to something that feels like a responsibility to society."

## The enthusiast

Feng subscribes to four different newspapers. His home isn't hard to find for the local postmen: there are four different newspaper boxes in different colors on the front door. The box for *Beijing Evening News* is gray, for *Beijing Morning Post* it's yellow, the one for *Star Daily* is red, and the one for *Beijing Times* is blue.

Besides these four dailies, Feng reads *Beijing Youth Daily* and *China Youth Daily* at work. So each day he browses through at least six different papers. This has been a habit for many years, giving him a good knowledge of the history and development of every major newspaper in Beijing.

Feng's interest in journalism was sparked by one of his uncles who worked as a reporter for Xinhua News Agency. "My uncle was a good reporter and he won many journalism awards," says Feng. "Becoming a reporter like my uncle was my childhood ideal."

Feng didn't become a reporter but his interest in journalism never waned. He started contributing articles to newspapers in the early 1980s. "The supplement part of *Beijing Evening News* invited contributions from its readers in 1983 and I responded immediately, dreaming about seeing my name in the newspaper."

On April 27 1983, Feng's first piece appeared in *Beijing Evening News*. He still remembers it well. "It was a short humorous story," he remembers. "A little boy asked his father on a bus: 'Dad, why do you always close your eyes when the bus arrives at the Children's Hospital?' His father replied, 'Because many women with babies in their arms get on the bus at this stop.' 'So what?' 'If I see them I will have to offer them a seat and then we will lost our places.'"

Feng was pleased to receive two yuan from the newspaper for this contribution. He was 18 years old at the time. He bought a copy of *The Legend of the Three Kingdoms* with the money. Since then, he has written a number of short stories and articles for different newspapers.

Several new daily papers have been established in Beijing in the last

five years. Amateur writers like Feng suddenly had a bigger stage on which to show their talent. Almost every newspaper set up a page for "hotline news" collecting news stories and information from readers. True to form, Feng has been one of their most regular callers.

## An eye for detail

Feng contacts the papers with tips for stories about ten times every month on average. Usually, about half of his ideas end up as stories. Feng himself works in the administrative office in Beihai Park. He works five days a week and most of the ideas come to him on his way to and from work. "I am a very observant person. I discover little changes in this city that other people ignore," he says.

For instance, on his way back home on November 3 2002, Feng found the nameplate on the east of the Tian'anmen Gate had been changed from "People's Cultural Palace" back to "Ancestral Temple". He immediately dialed the news hotline of *Beijing Youth Daily* and told them the interesting news, so the paper sent a team of reporters right away to dig up the story and an in-depth analysis was published the following day.

The temple, first built in 1420, used to be the place where emperors of the Ming and Qing Dynasty offered annual sacrifices to their ancestors. In was renamed "People's Cultural Palace" after 1949 and became a regular venue for an annual book fair and other cultural events. To help preserve the 600-year-old building, the annual book fair was moved to another place last year and the original name of the temple was restored to highlight its historical value.

"The nameplate was changed in early October. I bet many people had already seen the change before me," says Feng. "They just didn't pay any attention to it." Besides calling such developments to the attention of the press, Feng still contributes his own short articles to newspapers' supplements.

*Beijing Times* has a column about "Hutong Culture", collecting humorous stories about hutong life from readers. Feng is one of the most prolific authors for this column. Last month, he had nine short stories published under it. "My inspiration for these stories comes from my daily life," he says.

Two of the stories he contributed last month were conceived on a single trip to the supermarket. He wanted to buy strawberries for his daughter, but the fresh strawberries at the supermarket were quite expensive, 10 yuan per jin. A warmhearted old woman told him they were much cheaper at another shop

nearby, just 3 yuan per jin. But when he got there, he found it was actually 3 yuan for 100 grams, making it 15 yuan per jin, even more expensive. So Feng decided to write a humorous story based on this after going back home.

On his way home, Feng's little daughter saw a hotel named "Mayor's Home". In the evening when the TV news talked about the mayor addressing the local residents about the fight against SARS, the little girl declared: "I know where he lives." This provided a second story.

## Learning from experience

Feng not only develops his own talent in contributing to newspapers, he also encourages other people to do the same. His wife has written several short stories, although none of them have been published so far.

One of Feng's colleagues at Beihai Park was influenced by his enthusiasm for journalism and began to look for potential stories himself. "Whenever he has an idea, he will come and ask me first," says Feng with a proud smile. "He believes I am more experienced in choosing news stories."

As an experienced amateur correspondent, Feng has learned a number of things about choosing stories. "First, you need to know the different styles of newspapers and the preferences of their editors," he says. *Beijing Youth Daily* reports important news about the city and not so many trivial things. *Beijing Evening News* covers more of people's small problems in daily life, like an old man falling out of bed in a hospital." Every time he has an idea, he will think about which newspaper would be interested.

Timing is another factor. In March 2000, Feng found something strange outside Beihai Park. A new stretch of pavement intended for blind people had a lot of turns in it, making it difficult to negotiate. Feng took a photo and called *Beijing Youth Daily*. "They ignored this idea. But when I reported the same thing again on the national day of support-for-handicapped in May, it was taken."

A fresh perspective is also important. "For example, the illegal fishing on the bank of Shicha Lake has been reported many times in newspapers. Last August, I found middle-school students fishing on the lake's banks and wrote an article about students' summer vacation activities. *Beijing Youth Daily* published the article."

Now Feng's 7-year-old daughter has begun to learn from her father, paying attention to little changes in her life, and making press clippings of interesting stories.



There are four different newspaper boxes.



Feng and his daughter in Beihai Park



He can't wait to read them all.

Photos by Zhuang Jian





Qianliang Hutong

The 20 hutongs singled out for special attention are: Cuihua and Meizha in the Donghuamen area; Beixinqiao 11 and 12 Tiao; Xizongbu and Ganmian in the Jiaoguomen area; Zhonglao and Xilao in the Jingshan area; Dongsi 6 and 8 Tiao; Mao'er and Qilao in the Jiadaokou area; Donghou and Xinghua Lu in the Hepingli area; Jiadaokou Bei 2 and Huafeng in the Andingmen area; Yanye and Lishi in the Chaoyangmen area; Dongzhong Lu and the West Road of Donghuan Square in the Dongzhimen area.



Yu'er Hutong



Nansongnian Hutong  
Photos by Wu Qiang / Yang Sheng



Mao'er Hutong

# Hutongs Get a Facelift

By Iris Miao

A major renovation has begun of the remaining hutongs, or alleys, in Dongcheng District. According to a spokesman from the district government, some 100 hutongs will be spruced up, with special efforts being directed toward 20 of the most ornate to ensure they retain as much of their original essence as possible.

Beixinqiao street authority has invested three million yuan for the renovation of the architectural details that typify hutong buildings, such as upturned eaves and carved beams. Beixinqiao 11 and 12 Tiao have already been cleaned up, and all illegal buildings have been demolished.

In the Jingshan area, as well as unifying the facades of the shops in the hutongs, the main priority is demolishing illegally constructed buildings.

To many, Beijing's old hutongs are the soul of the city, and each of the 20 singled out for special care, in their own way, tell a vivid history of the capital.

**Ganmian, Cuihua, Qilao and Lishi Hutongs**

Ganmian Hutong boasts a history of over 500 years. It has some magnificent courtyards, including

the former residences of poet Bian Zhilin (No. 11), and bridge engineer Mao Yisheng (No. 33).

Cuihua Hutong is the site of Yuebin Restaurant, New China's first privately owned restaurant, which opened on September 30, 1980.

No. 35 Qilao Hutong was once a garden called Yiyuan, complete with an artificial hill, pond, bridge, pavilion, and a boat-shaped open corridor. There are four large courtyards remaining in Lishi Hutong, of which No. 129 is the most important. Although the evidence is inconclusive, it is said to be the former residence of Liu Yong (1719-1804), senior secretary of the Grand Secretariat of the Qing Dynasty.

**Dongsi 6 and 8 Tiao**

The block between Dongsi 3 and 8 tiao in Dongsi dates back to the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368).

No. 55 Dongsi 6 Tiao was a former residence of Sha Qianli, a party leader during the Anti-Japanese War who later served as vice minister of trade and commerce.

No. 63 and 65 of the same street were the residence and garden of Chong Li, a senior secretary of the Grand Secretariat of the Qing Dynasty during the reign of Qing Emperor Guangxu (1875-1908). The residence covers an area of 11,400

square meters, with an artificial hill, a pavilion, a crescent-shaped pond, and an opera stage.

No. 71 at Dongsi 8 Tiao is the former residence of Ye Shengtao, a man of letters, educator and a vice minister of education during the early years of the People's Republic of China. It is a typical three yard courtyard, with a Ruyi (S-shaped) ornament on the street door.

**Mao'er Hutong**

Mao'er Hutong is one of Beijing's best preserved hutongs.

No. 5 is a neatly structured courtyard with four yards in a row. The houses in one of the yards are connected by corridors with painted cross-beams in Suzhou-style. Some of the doors and windows retain the Qing Dynasty style. It is now used by the army.

No. 9, Keyuan Garden, was first built in 1861. It is a well-preserved private garden. The first owner was Wen Yu, a senior secretary of the Grand Secretariat of the Qing Dynasty. During Emperor Guanxu's reign, the garden was turned into a replica of Zhuozhengyuan and Shizilin gardens in Suzhou. A bamboo covered artificial hill, scree-paved roads, pavilions, a pond, an arched bridge, corridors, flowers and trees are elegantly arranged within the garden.

It served as the embassy of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for a time after 1949, and was later turned into a guesthouse. The main structures in the central yard remain virtually unchanged.

Just to the west, at No. 11, is Wen Yu's former residence. It is a courtyard with five yards in a row.

No. 13 is the former residence of Feng Guozhang, executive president during the Republic of China (1911-1949). No. 21 was once the site of a temple for making offerings to the god for official career and fortune. The front part of the temple is now a primary school, but a Ming Dynasty stone tablet still stands in the back yard.

No. 35 and 37 were the residence of empress Wan Rong, wife of the last emperor Pu Yi, before she married. The courtyard was first built by Wan Rong's great grandfather, and was enlarged after she became empress.

No. 45 was a prefect's yamen during the Qing Dynasty, and local police headquarters during the Republic of China.

At the western end of Mao'er Hutong is Hou Hai, and what better way to end a hutong tour than with a cold beer and a plate of *maodou* (hairy beans) at one of the many bars around the perimeter of the lake.

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# Inspiring Art under Blue Skies



Beijing's new tribal maskings?



The installation, IV Drip for Mother Earth



Wang Yousheng and his thermometer kite

Photos by Hu Jinxi

By Iris Miao

One of the most effective remedies for SARS, according to doctors and people who have recovered from the disease, is optimism. A good place to get a dose of uplift was the open-air exhibition south of the Yizhuang Economic and Technology Development Zone last Saturday afternoon. Under the theme of "Blue Sky Exposure", over 100 artists gathered at the sight to display their photographs, installations, performance pieces, films, and music in a large field of green grass.

The works on show represented the artists' feelings about the epidemic, while at the same time reveling in the free spirit and joy of art in this strange time of isolation and fear. Most of the exhibits were installation works made of materials related to SARS, such as masks, transfusion bottles, thermometers, trash bags and even fake lungs fashioned from cloth.

Artists were asked to personally transport their pieces and be at the spot at 8:30 that morning, while those without their own transportation had to meet at 7 am at the 798 Space in the

Dashanzi Art Zone in northeastern Beijing.

Though SARS seemed to be under control last weekend, the organizers canceled the opening ceremony planned for the early afternoon in the interest of everyone's safety. They also asked all attendees to wear masks and maintain safe distances between each other.

However, not only did nobody come masked, audience numbers greatly surpassed expectations. "I'd estimate around 1,000 people showed up," said curator Feng Boyi with a smile on his face burned red after being in the sun all day. "Our intention was to give people a chance to relax in the open air, and I think people had fun."

The outside exhibition started with an installation work called *Please Wash Your Hands Before Visiting the Show* by Ma Wen, who currently resides in the U.S. *Sunbathe the King* by artist Chen Qingqing, is composed of tree branches, bamboo, broom straw, linen and dried flowers, and stood out as the most delicate and beautiful of the installation works.

Well-known artist Lü Sheng-

zhong also participated the event, showing his work *Boundary*, an installation of six white gauze tents printed with silhouettes of an exercising male figure in different positions. Feng commented, "Lü's work is very original and very clear in theme. Of all of these, it is the most complete piece."

Throughout the event, the lofty goal of the organizers and artists flew on hundred of kites printed with the words "We Will Overcome SARS" in Chinese and English. The kites were specially ordered from Weifang, Shandong province, known as China's "home of kites", and were passed out free to people at the show and in downtown areas and other city parks the same day. The show's organizers and other artists intended to continue to distribute the kites until SARS has been eliminated in China and around the world.

One of the initiators of this exhibition, photographer Xu Yong, said the works shown on Saturday have been moved to his 798 Space gallery and the Beijing Tokyo Art Projects run by co-sponsor Huang Rui in the Dashanzi Art Zone.

## Pastoral Bliss

### Inspires Village Girls

By Zhang Xiaoxia

*Village Girls' Impressions*, an exhibition of the works of more than 40 women artists living in the countryside of Beijing and who call themselves the "village girls" kicks off today at the Beijing Dalu Artist Painting Gallery.

Since the mid-90s, groups of local artists have chosen the quiet and calm of the countryside over the hustle and noise of downtown. They have moved to villages in Changping District's Shangyuan area, Songzhuang in Tongzhou District and also to Huajiadi, home of the Central Academy of the Fine Arts.

"The country life makes [these women] pure and free from desire," commented Wang Yun, curator of the show. He described their work as showing vigorous thought, creative methods and a spirit of exploration, a result of their being free of urban materialism.

Hao Li, whose painting *Winding Thinker* is in the show, made her debut at the 2000 Young Artists Invitation Exhibition in Beijing. Her works combine fresco and Chinese folk painting styles.

Zhang Hui was one of the first Beijing-based artists to chose the pastoral life. Her painting *Petal* shows a "strong feeling of independence," according to Wang. Li Yun, painter of *Stage Life*, seems more concerned with detail and local art styles, and her works are normally imbued with a relaxing vibe.

*Village Girls' Impressions* is Wang Yun's second exhibition to focus on artists that have retreated to the countryside.

**When:** May 30 to June 8, 9:30 am - 5:30 pm **Where:** Dalu Artists Painting Gallery in the Tulip Garden, Jinzhan Town, Chaoyang **Tel:** 8431 3204



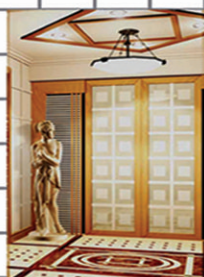
Stage Life - Spring

by Li Yun

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# No Prizes for Purple Butterfly

By Dong Nan

To the disappointment of local film fans, Lou Ye's *Purple Butterfly* failed to collect any awards at the 56th Cannes Film Festival, which wound up Sunday.

Starring Zhang Ziyi, *Purple Butterfly* is an epic drama about

love and resistance set in Japanese-occupied China during World War II.

Many people in the audience at the premiere last Thursday complained that the film was incomprehensible and some 20 percent left before the end.

"In fact, *Purple Butterfly* is not for everyone, but I'm sure that some will like it," Zhang Ziyi told media at the premiere.

Festival judges paid a rare tribute to Gus Van Sant's *Elephant*, a film loosely based on

the Columbine school shootings, awarding it two of the top prizes; the Palme d'Or and Best Director.

Canadian actress Marie José Croze won Best Actress award for her performance in *The Barbarian Invasions*.

## Special Performance for SARS 'Angels'

By Dong Nan

Model syringes were used to burst two balloons symbolizing the SARS virus in a little ritual before a special concert held by Beijing Music Radio for doctors and nurses taking a break from the fight against SARS.

Pop stars Han Hong, Wang Feng, Gao Qi and Xie Xiaodong took part, performing topical selections including *Blessing*, *Hero*, *Angels* and *Rainbow*.

Insisting on singing her new song *Angels* once more, without accompaniment, Han Hong told the audience, "This song is written for you specially, I hope all of you can hear the lyric comes forth from my heart."



Lao Lang

## Balladeer Back from Africa

By Dong Nan

Campus favorite Lao Lang (Old Wolf) has completed his three month sojourn in Africa and returns to Beijing today.

The trip, part of CCTV and Phoenix Satellite TV's *Trip to Africa*, began in February, with Lao Lang acting as a special reporter for the West Africa segment of the program.

During the one-hundred-day trip, Lao Lang kept a detailed dairy, which he says he plans to publish.

Lao Lang says he paid special attention to African music, visiting local musicians and buying local albums everywhere he went. He noted in his diary that African music should become his inspiration of creation, possibly for his next album, due out this October.

With his nostalgic hit *Tong Zhuo De Ni* (My Old Classmate), Lao Lang became a favorite on campuses all over China in 1993. He released *Bright Days* at the end of last year, after being out of the spotlight for many years.

*Trip to Africa* is currently screening on CCTV-4 and CCTV-10.



## Zhou Xun Tops the Charts

By Dong Nan

While Zhou Xun's new martial arts TV drama, *Legend of The Condor Heroes*, has attracted mixed reviews, her latest album *Summer* is a hit.

Released on April 18, the album has already chalked up sales of 280,000 units,

outdoing pop veteran Liu Huan and hot pop group Yu Quan, who also released albums last month.

"Zhou's performance is surprisingly good. Nobody would think she is an amateur singer after listening to the album. To be frank, I think her songs could make

many 'super stars' feel ashamed," says Sina.com's Cole, a renowned critic.

Instead of the usual glossy production-house artwork, the photos for the album sleeve were taken by Zhou herself, giving fans a titillating glimpse of her very own pillow and favorite nightie.

## Sanbao Releases Movie Music

By Nebula Dong

Renowned composer Sanbao released two new albums last Sunday: *Direct Impact II*, songs and music for movies and TV soaps, and the soundtrack to the movie *Gada Meilin*.

Following the success of *Direct Impact I* in 2001, which featured movie hits by Sanbao including *Be There or Be Square*, *Direct Impact II* collects Sanbao's latest work, including music from *Big Shot's Funeral*, *Golden Family*, *Beauty in Misty Rain* and *Lost Paradise*. Faye Wang and Jeff Zhang are among the singers featured on the new album.

The movie *Gada Meilin* tells a tragic story



Poster the film Gada Meilin

of a Mongolian hero. A Mongolian himself, Sanbao says he was familiar with the story and put all his talent and feeling into it.

### WORLDWIDE



Director Gus Van Sant

#### Elephant Gets Rare Double at Cannes Nods

Gus Van Sant's minimalist take on the Columbine high school massacre, *Elephant*, scooped the Palme d'Or and the best director award Sunday at the 56th Festival de Cannes.

The last time an American movie took the Palme was in 1994, when *Pulp Fiction* won for Quentin Tarantino — one of a number of past Cannes luminaries who did not submit their current projects for Croisette exposure this year, resulting in what many considered the worst Cannes lineup in decades.

The jury, headed by French actor-writer-director Patrice Chereau, chose to spread its main awards across just three movies, the other two being *Uzak* (*Distant*), directed by Turkey's Nuri Bilge Ceylan, and *The Barbarian Invasions* from Quebecois writer-director Denys Arcand.



Whitney Houston and Ariel Sharon

#### Pop Diva Meets Israeli Leader Sharon

Whitney Houston on Tuesday visited Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who took time out from preparations for a summit with his Palestinian counterpart and President Bush to meet the pop diva.

"It's home. It's a friendship I've never had with any other country," Houston, dressed in a long red robe with white embroidery, told Sharon.

Houston was in Israel with her husband, rhythm and blues singer Bobby Brown, to visit "friends and family" among the Black Hebrews, an African-American community that moved to Israel in 1969 and settled in the southern town of Dimona.

#### Aaron Neville Gets Back to 'Nature'

Veteran New Orleans-based vocalist Aaron Neville plans to release an album of his interpretations of American standards.

Due August 26, 2002, *Nature Boy* is his first album under a new deal with Verve. The collection features Neville working through songs by the likes of Nat "King" Cole, Cole Porter, and George Gershwin, among others.

Neville is joined on *Nature Boy* by collaborators Linda Ronstadt, Roy Hargrove, Ry Cooder, Michael Brecker, Ron Carter, Grady Tate, and Anthony Wilson.



David Bowie

#### David Bowie Bonds Sliding Down the Charts

Moody's Investors Service says it may downgrade about \$55 million of bonds backed by music royalties of rock music icon David Bowie in light of the sales slump in the recording industry.

In 1997, Bowie was the first musician to sell bonds supported by future revenues generated from his record master and publishing rights. The sale of these asset-backed securities to private investors raised \$55 million up-front for the British rocker.

Since the Bowie deal, musicians and songwriters like James Brown and the Isley Brothers issued similar bonds backed by expected future revenues from their music catalogs.

#### Jim Carrey Is 'Almighty' at US Box Office

With a little divine help, comedian Jim Carrey propelled the lucrative summer box office season to a record-breaking start over the US Memorial Day holiday weekend.

Carrey's new film *Bruce Almighty*, in which the 40-year-old Canadian plays a disenfranchised newsman entrusted with omnipotence by God himself, sold a better-than-expected \$86 million worth of tickets in its first four days.



Jim Carrey in Bruce Almighty

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# We Are the Champions

By Hou Mingxin

**T**he Chinese national table tennis team came back triumphant from the 47th World Championships, held May 19 to 26 in Paris, with four of the five gold medals in hand. It was a great showing, especially since the team members were playing under the new 11-point scoring system and no-hide service rule adopted by the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) in 2001.

It was also a satisfying return to form after the team's disappointing show at last year's Asian games, where they captured only three of the seven golds.



Wang Nan, woman's singles champion



Wang Liqin (right) and Yan Sen, men's doubles champions



Wang Nan and Zhang Yining (right), women's doubles champions



Wang Nan (right) and Ma Lin, mixed doubles champions  
Xinhua Photos

## Hat-trick for Wang Nan

Defending women's world champion Wang Nan bagged her third consecutive crown in beating compatriot Zhang Yining 4-3 in the women's singles final. The win was a real vindication for Wang, as she had a disappointing performance at the Asian Games, where she failed to win any titles. "The loss in the Asian Games last year was a great blow, I was even thinking of retirement," she said, as

quoted by a report published by the Xinhua News Agency.

Wang, currently ranked second in the world, started strong to take the first three sets, only to see Zhang rally back to tie the match at three-all.

But Wang held off Zhang's comeback and took the deciding set, showing the form which has helped her take both Olympic and world championship titles.

Besides the women's singles ti-

tle, Wang also played on the winning mixed and women's doubles teams in Paris.

Following her remarkable success, the 25-year-old is earning comparison with retired Chinese table tennis legend Deng Yaping, who won nine world titles and four Olympic gold medals during her career.

Wang did not win her first world title until the 1999 world championships, when Deng had virtually retired from the sport and gone to study at university.

The most striking difference between the two stars lies in their personalities, as Wang is more extroverted and a more aggressive player.

"I hope I can win some gold medals at the 2004 Athens Olympics, so that I will have the same number of Olympic titles as Deng Yaping," Wang said.

## A reward for Zhang Yining

After losing in the women's singles finals, Zhang Yining paired up with Wang Nan the next day to win the women's doubles title.

Zhang, the top ranked women's player in the world before the championships, said, "Yes, I was disappointed yesterday after the singles final, but that wasn't on my mind today."

She and Wang showed the advantages of their experience and right-hander and left-hander combination to handily overcome their young teammates Guo Yue and Niu Jianfeng. However, Guo and Niu left

Paris satisfied, as they were not expected to make it to the finals. To meet them there for the all-Chinese last match, Wang and Zhang defeated South Korea's Suk Eun Mi and Lee Eun Sil. The two Korean women bagged the doubles' title at last year's Asian Games over Zhang and teammate Li Nan.

## Golden pair

Chinese golden boys Wang Liqin and Yan Sen, the world and Olympic champions, beat teammates Kong Linghui and Wang Hao to take home the men's double gold.

Only a few hours before, Wang Liqin bowed out in the quarterfinals of the men's singles competition, but did not seem to take it too hard. "I didn't expect to lose in the quarterfinals, but on the whole I think I can be pretty pleased with my performance in Paris," he concluded.

Wang's partner, Yan Sen, focuses on the doubles game in international competitions. "I've been playing in Japan since last year and Wang Liqin has played with several other partners on the ITTF Pro Tour," he said. "A few months ago I returned to China and started preparing for Paris, and I focused on the doubles with Wang."

The two make a good team, with Yan and his penhold grip creating situations where Wang can unleash his powerful topspin strokes. The Olympic gold medalists left no doubt that they are the best men's ping-pong pair in the world.

## All-Chinese affair

The Chinese team's domination was most clear in the mixed doubles competition, as all four teams in the semifinals came from China.

In the end, the team of men's world number two Ma Lin and women's world number two Wang Nan overcame Liu Guozheng and Bai Yang.

Afterwards, some of the players noted that their familiarity proved a difficult obstacle. Ma Lin said, "Everybody could see it was a very tough match. We know each other very well, so all the time it was a matter of finding the opponents' weaknesses. We didn't play well at all in the first two games but in the third we decided to play more topspins and it started to work out for us."

He continued, "I enjoy playing with Wang Nan, because she is always very confident. Often it is the man who is the leader in mixed doubles, but playing with a world champion like Wang Nan, it is different -- her confidence and experience are very important to me."

The Chinese duos of Niu Jianfeng and Qin Zhijian, and Li Nan and Wang Hao shared third place.

The team's performance was a dramatic turn-around from last year's Asian Games, where no Chi-

nese players appeared in the mixed doubles finals.

## Dream victory for Schlager

While China dominated the other events, the men's singles final came down to Austrian Werner Schlager and South Korea's Joo Se Hyuk. Schlager took the gold with four games to two.

The 30-year-old chalked up Europe's first victory in the world championships since Swedish legend Jan-Ove Waldner triumphed in 1997, and the first-ever victory for an Austrian.

"It's just absolutely unbelievable," said Schlager after the match, "My goal was the quarter finals and perhaps a medal if everything went my way. Playing and winning in front of a crowd of 10,000 people, all going crazy, it is like a dream...It's dream come true!"

With the victory, the Austrian became not only world champion but also the world's top-ranked men's player.

"It's hard to describe how I feel," continued Schlager, "If you are going to win a big event you need the luck of the draw. I was confident before the final -- I'm used to going against Joo Se Hyuk's style of play."

Undoubtedly, it helped Schlager that on his national team is Chen Weixing, a defensive player who has a strong forehand attack and uses similar materials on his racket, long pimples on the backhand and reversed rubber on the forehand.

"I congratulate Werner, he was too clever for me today and didn't allow me to dominate the match," said Joo Se Hyuk, the first defensive player to appear in a men's singles final since the 1969 world championships.

The Chinese team did not conceal their disappointment in failing to take home the badly-wanted medal.

"We have advanced our skills, but we are not as daring as some foreign players. We put ourselves under pressure, which made us liable to make mistakes and bad decisions," said Yin Xiao, the Chinese men's singles coach.

Yin made those remarks after Schlager defeated 2000 Olympic champion and 1995 world champion Kong Linghui of China in a heated 4-3 semifinal match. China's other two top players, Ma Lin and Wang Liqin, lost in the quarterfinals.

## Dream team's weak points

The loss of the men's singles title has exposed the weak points of the Chinese "dream team". China's four top players, Olympic champion Kong Linghui, world champion Wang Liqin, Ma Lin, and Wang Hao were all eliminated from the championships after blowing leads in their matches.

"We have to find a better way of dealing with taking a lead under the 11-point scoring system," said Li Furong, former world champion, vice minister of sport and the leader of the Chinese delegation at the championships "We need to address this problem in the future."

Yin Xiao, men's singles coach, said after Kong's defeat in the semifinals that the leads slipped away partly due to the mental pressure facing the players.

"In several big matches, we were not daring enough. We failed to play aggressively when we should have, and that made a big difference," he added.

Joo Se Hyuk's success also rang some alarm bells among the Chinese team for attaching more importance to the development of defensive skills and players.

Cai Zhenhua, head coach of Chinese national table tennis team, admitted that they were not mentally or technically prepared for defensive players, who have had relatively little impact in major events over nearly the past three decades.

Cai also stressed the Chinese team would seek solutions to that problem in anticipation of facing Joo and other defensive players in the 2004 Olympics.

While reviewing the problems exposed in the world championships, the Chinese team remains upbeat about dealing with the challenges posed by the new 11-point scoring system.

"Judging from the championships, the rule change has affected our performance. However, it doesn't seem to be such a big problem, considering what we achieved," said Vice Minister Li Furong.

He continued, "The Olympics are one year away, and we will try to win back the men's singles title there."



Werner Schlager, men's singles champion





T6 Spicy Hotpot

Photos by Wang Yong

By James Liu

**T**he past month has been a hard time to get a bite out, with restaurants all over the city closing their doors until SARS is brought under control. All nine of the popular Jiutouniao Hubei-style restaurants have shut, as have local institutions such as the Quanjude Roast Duck restaurants. However, there still is recourse for people tired of eating at home, as some restaurants have stayed open and managed to draw consistent customer flows. The restaurants listed below are among the most popular in these lean times, drawing diners for both their tasty food and solid sanitation.

#### New Taste in Hotpot

The new restaurant T6 Spicy Hotpot, located inside the SOHO residential complex, had the bad luck of opening just before the SARS outbreak, but has not closed its doors. That has proven to be a good decision, as hordes of diners have been drawn to its creative version of the ever-popular hotpot. Owner Qi Bo said, "Sour, sweet, bitter, hot, and salty are the traditional five flavors of Chinese cuisine. Our hotpot adds another taste to that list - spicy. So we named the restaurant T6."



Half-hot, half-not hotpot

The air inside is remarkably free of the heady spice and oil melange of most hotpot restaurants, a result of this establishment's powerful air control system that refreshes the interior air every four minutes. That system has proven a particular draw for diners concerned about contracting SARS. "At first, we installed the system because we did not want everyone going home smelling like hotpot. It was a lucky coincidence that good ventilation is so important to preventing SARS, and probably part of the reason we are full almost every day," said Qi.

The restaurant also stands out from the hotpot flock by not using *laotang*, left-over soup, and by mainly serving beef and lamb for dunking in authentic Sichuan style.

Before guests take their seats, the waitstaff disinfect the tables, over which hang ventilation fans that double as lamps. The special of the house is chicken soup made with ginseng, Chinese wolfberry, date, and some other Chinese herbs (25 yuan). Though the soup is dyed red from chili peppers, it is not hot as it looks.

Menu items worth trying include cow tripe (*jinqian du*, 18 yuan), fried meat in flour (*surou*,

## Restaurants Down, but Not Out



Paulaner's outdoor area

15), pork tripe (T6 tripe, 25 yuan) and *huanglading* (a loach-like fish, 36 yuan). A variety of beers is available, most going for 10 yuan per bottle. Chinese menu.

**Add:** B Building, SOHO, Chaoyang **Open:** 10 am - 11 pm **Tel:** 8580 6014 **Average cost:** 45 yuan per person

#### Toasting at Jinbaiwan

This restaurant, opened last September near the Panjiayuan antique market, is just one of the 16 Jinbaiwan Roast Duck eateries in the city. Clearly they are onto something, because even though there is seating for 800, there often are still lines at the door.



Photo by Aily

Aside from the namesake roast duck, the restaurant's signature dish is spicy snails (*fushou luo*, 22 yuan), made with snails shipped in from Sichuan Province to guarantee authenticity of flavor. Other choices include braised meat balls (*shizitou*, 2.5 yuan each) the size of



Spicy snails, shuzhu yu, and grilled lamb

small fists, and stewed fish in red oil (*shuizhu yu*, 28 yuan), served in small basin but more

than enough to feed two.

The large parking lot has room for 100 cars. Chinese menu.

**Add:** 43, Commercial Building, Songyu Xili, Panjiayuan, Chaoyang **Open:** 10:30 am - 10:30 pm **Tel:** 6730 5119 **Average cost:** 25 yuan per person

#### Drinking Time at Paulaner

Tradition has had to take a backseat at the Paulaner Brauhaus, but the long-running restaurant and brewery seems more popular than ever. Paulaner had planned to hold a Maifest celebration from May 10 to 25, with music, Bavarian showgirls and real Maibock beer. As a result of the SARS outbreak, the performers backed out, but the beer came out just as planned, with a rich, dark bronze color and smooth, complex flavor (40 yuan for a .3 liter glass).

What may be the best beer in town, the restaurant is also running a white asparagus promotion through the end of June. Recommended dishes include Paulaner's most popular offering, broiled pork knuckle with sauerkraut and potato (130 yuan), and six kinds of soup, including beef broth with pancake and Bavarian liver dumpling soup, which go for 39 yuan per bowl. The seven varieties of salads all sell for 45 yuan and are generous enough to satisfy two diners.

**Add:** Lufthansa Center, 50 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang **Open:** 11 am - 11 pm **Tel:** 6465 3388 ext. 5732 **Average cost:** 150 yuan per person plus 15 percent surcharge

#### Getting Familiar at Tai-shuxi

This restaurant, squarely targeted at the middle-income bracket, packs them in everyday, SARS or no SARS. "One of the reasons so many people come is that they



know we only use sterilized tableware," said manager Hu Xiaoqun. Of course the main draw is the restaurant's credible versions of dishes from Sichuan, Guangdong and Northeast China.

Spicy and satisfying stewed fish in red oil (*shuizhu yu*, 38 yuan) goes for 50 yuan per kilogram, while the ever-popular spicy crab (*xiangla xie*) goes for 116 yuan per kilogram. Other high-end offerings include lobster (436 yuan per kilogram), stewed abalone (*hongshao baochi*, 128 yuan) and rice with shark fin soup (*yuchi laofan*, 78 yuan), though most dishes are far less expensive.

The restaurant is airy and comfortable, though suffers from décor schizophrenia, the large room marred with a mish-mash of tacky sculptures, painting and lamps. The front offers ample parking, and in non-SARS times, the restaurant is open 24 hours a day.

**Add:** East Gate of Tuanjiehu Park, Chaoyang **Open:** 24 hours **Tel:** 8598 4766 **Average cost:** 31 yuan per person



Maoxuewang, 22 yuan



## Health Food Top Ten

By Lisa Huang

An article in recent issue of *Time* magazine, named the "ten most nutritious foods." Ranking high were tomatoes and other vegetables and fruits, while the writers tagged potatoes, white bread and rice as low on their scale and suggested their consumption in limited quantity. Below is the "ten best" rankings, a short list towards better health.

**Tomatoes** Recent research has shown that tomatoes contain the element lycopene, believed to reduce the likelihood of developing cancer. Tomatoes are also very rich sources of vitamin C.

**Spinach** Spinach is rich in vitamin B and iron, which can effectively prevent some blood vessel diseases. Because one kilogram of spinach only contains 41 calories, it is a good choice for people trying to watch their weight.

**Nuts** Nuts, such as peanuts and almonds, can lower blood cholesterol, a key to preventing heart problems. However, nuts should be eaten in limited amount, because they are hard on the digestive system.

**Cauliflower** This vegetable is rich in beta carotene and vitamin C. Eating plenty of cauliflower can significantly lower chances of getting breast, stomach and other can-

cers. Cabbage and bean sprouts have similar attributes.

**Oats** Some doctors believe that eating oats everyday can lower blood pressure and reduce cholesterol. Moreover, oats give people the feeling of being full, making them effective for controlling weight.

**Salmon** This fish can prevent the blocking of blood vessels and is rich in omega-3 oils, which are good for the brain and other parts of the body.

**Garlic** Some people may be turned off by garlic's pungent odor, but this little bulb is effective in preventing heart disease and can kill harmful viruses and bacteria within the body.

**Blueberry** More than other berries, blueberries contain lots of antioxidants, elements that can ward away heart disease and cancer. The nutrients in blueberries are also beneficial to the brain.

**Green tea** Research by some Chinese and Japanese scientists has nearly conclusively proven that drinking green tea can lower chances of developing cancer and a range of heart diseases.

**Wine** Grape skin is chock full of antioxidants that can lower cholesterol and prevent vascular hardening. However, overindulgence can lead to such negative effects as breast cancer and apoplexy.

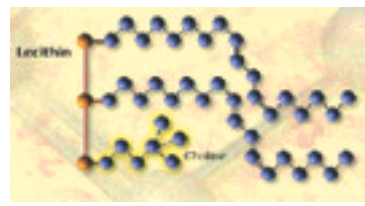
## A Little Lecithin a Day...

By James Liu

Lecithin is an integral part of all organs and glands that is required by every single cell of the body. The cell membranes in the body are composed largely of lecithin. Lecithin is used to prevent arteriosclerosis, protect against cardiovascular disease, improve brain function, increase energy levels, repair damage from alcoholism, help in digestion of fats and fight aging, immune system disorders, AIDS, herpes, and chronic fatigue syndrome. A lack of lecithin can cause forgetfulness, digestive problems, intolerance to fats, nausea, hypertension and joint and muscle problems.

Unfortunately, many of the richest sources of lecithin are also high in cholesterol and fat. For example, egg yolks and meats are good sources of lecithin. Grains, fruits and vegetables are much poorer sources. Soybeans also contain lecithin, though not in particularly large amounts.

Though the liver produces some lecithin, most of it has to be taken in through foods rich in



the element, such as fish head, sesame, mushrooms, wood ear, animal liver, egg yolk and soybeans. Below are a few recipes for getting one's daily lecithin fix.

**1. Egg Drink** Whisk one egg in a bowl and then add two cups of boiled hot water. Then add two teaspoons of honey and serve.

**2. Fish Head Soup** Clean one fish head and cut it into halves, keeping the brain and fat. Heat four tablespoons of oil in pot and stir-fry some diced ginger and garlic for two minutes. Add the fish head and stir-fry three more minutes, then pour in some hot water. Cook soup until it turns milky colored. Add two tablespoons salt and some diced scallions before serving.

**3. Tossed Fresh Bean Curd** Cut the bean curd into cubes and stir into two teaspoons of salt.

### Cooking Chinese at Home

## Stir-fried Balsam Pear

By James Liu

Balsam pear is a green, wrinkly vegetable, also know as bitter melon, a direct translation of its Chinese name, *kugua*. Though definitely an acquired taste, when cooked right, this vegetable's fresh flavor and pleasing crunch can quickly turn a skeptic into an addict.

**Ingredients:** 250 grams balsam pear; 50 grams carrot; 20 grams (2 tbsp) salad oil; 5 grams (1 tsp) sugar; 1 garlic; 5 grams scallions; 5 grams ginger; 5 grams (1 tsp) sesame oil; 10 grams salt (2 tsp)

**Procedure:** 1. Wash the balsam pear and cut in half. Remove the seeds and membrane, then slice into shreds. Wash and skin the carrots and shred or ju-

lienne. Mince the scallions, ginger and garlic.

2. Heat a wok over high heat, then add oil and heat one minute until hot. Add the scallions, ginger and garlic and quickly stir-fry. Then add the balsam pear, sugar, carrot and salt. Cook until carrot and balsam pear soften. Sprinkle with sesame oil and serve.





# WHO OK's Air Travel

A selective reprint of WHO's document on SARS-related air safety

This document addresses the main concerns of the public at large with regard to the risk of SARS transmission to passengers and/or crew embarking on an international voyage particularly from an area of recent local transmission. The World Health Organization (WHO) has been working closely with international air transport organizations, to provide accurate information in a timely manner to all persons involved in international air travel in order to further reduce the risk of spreading the disease by this means.

## Risk of SARS transmission in flight

The risk of transmission in aircraft is very low. To date, symptomatic probable SARS cases on four flights have been associated with possible transmission on-board. Two of these flights preceded WHO's March 15 emergency travel advisory, and since March 23 and the introduction of WHO-recommended screening measures by public health authorities no further cases of SARS in flight have been documented. A key factor in reducing the risk is for passengers and crew to be aware of the main symptoms of SARS which include high fever (over 38 Celsius), coughing, shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.

## Measure for persons with SARS symptoms prior to departure

WHO has recommended that passengers or crew who develop symptoms compatible with SARS postpone their travel until fully recovered. WHO further recommends that public health authorities ensure that areas with recent local transmission introduce exit screening measures, which may include temperature checks for all passengers and crew. Preventing symptomatic passengers from traveling minimizes risk. Finally, people in contact with probable SARS cases should not undertake travel (national or international) for a 10-day period following exposure.

## In-flight precautions and measures

### Personal hygiene

All passengers and crew should observe good personal hygiene. Wash hands frequently, particularly before eating. If pas-

sengers or crew cough or sneeze while onboard, they should cover their mouth and nose, and wash their hands afterwards.

### Face masks

Current evidence indicates that a person infected with SARS is not infectious to others unless he or she has symptoms. Therefore, WHO does not recommend the use of masks by asymptomatic passengers or crew. However, WHO recommends that passengers or crew showing symptoms compatible with SARS during a flight from an area with recent local transmission should:

- 1) wear a protective face mask;
- 2) be isolated, as far as possible, from other passengers; and
- 3) be given access to a toilet cordoned off for their exclusive use.

## Measures on arrival for a flight with a suspected SARS case

Passenger disembarkation may be delayed upon arrival while the medical officer at the airport of destination examines the patient. Following an assessment by public health authorities, passengers and crew may be required to provide their contact details for the next 14 days. All passengers and crew who are otherwise healthy should be allowed to continue their onward journey. If the ill passenger or crew member is confirmed as a probable case of SARS, public health authorities should notify contacts using the contact details provided.

## Risk of infection from handling baggage or goods

There is no evidence to date to suggest that a person can be infected with SARS from handling baggage or goods, as the major route of transmission is close face-to-face contact with a SARS victim.

In flight, fresh air is introduced into the cabin continuously and the entire cabin air volume is exchanged every three minutes. At the same time, airflow movement is designed to minimize the potential for spreading of bacteria and viruses through the cabin.

Most major airlines install HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) filters which are highly efficient in removing dust and airborne contaminants such as droplets, bacteria and large microbes. (WHO)

# Best Five Fitness Exercises

By Huang Lisha

## Jogging: the best anti-aging exercise

Scientists believe that regular jogging over reasonable distances can activate anti-oxidants within the body, which are effective in controlling the effects of aging.

## Skiing and Swimming: the best weight-lose exercises

Because these two exercises use nearly every part of the body, they are the best choices for overall weight loss. Boxing, weight lifting and mountain climbing have similar effects.

## Walking: the best anti-high pressure exercise

Research conducted by Japanese scientists has shown that walking can

effectively lower blood pressure by making blood vessels contract and relax continuously. Swimming and cycling can have the same results.

## Aerobics and gymnastics: the best bodybuilding exercises

These exercises require coordination and grace and can both build muscle and enhance balance.

## Table tennis: the best exercise for the eyes

When playing ping-pong, you have to focus on the small ball and follow its movement, making the eye muscles contract and release regularly and thereby improving or protecting eyesight.

# The Squeeze on Juice

By Huang Lisha

Juice, both store-bought and homemade, has become a popular way for many people to get their daily fruit and nutrition intake, but few understand that juice must be treated carefully to extract its full benefits. Below are several important points that should be followed in making and handling juice.

## Choose fresh fruit and vegetables

Make sure only fresh ingredients are used for juice to insure they are at their nutritional peak. It is even better to use home-raised or organic produce to avoid contamination



by pesticides or other harmful materials.

## Use a variety of fruits and vegetables

Making juices from a range of ingredients will provide a wider spectrum of vitamins and nutrients.

## Clean ingredients thoroughly

The skin of most fruits and vegetables are rich in nutrition and should be kept, making thorough cleaning very important. The best way is to soak a fruit or vegetable in salt water for several minutes after washing it carefully.

## Don't let juice sit

Prolonged exposure to air can destroy the vitamin content of juice, so it should be drunk as soon as possible after pressing.

## Drink juice in the morning

First thing in the morning, the stomach is empty, making it the best time to absorb nutrients and therefore the ideal time to have a glass of juice. Juice in the morning can give a person energy to last through the whole day.

Be careful not to drink juice just before going to bed, because it can burden the kidneys and have a negative effect on general health.

## Drink slowly

Drinking slowly allows time for juice to mix with the mouth's saliva, making the juice and nutrients inside easier to digest and absorb.

## Don't add sugar

When sugar decomposes, it can consume the vitamin B1 and B2 content in juice. Honey is a much better sweetener for juice.

# Eating to Keep Fit

By Helen Hong

Temptation is the enemy of nearly everyone that has ever tried to lose weight. Sometimes, we all feel like eating more at dinner, even though we are full. This is known as emotional eating and is purely psychological, having nothing to do with real, biological hunger. Unfortunately, there's no magic formula to stop emotional eating and everybody responds differently. Below are a few tips to help you with the sudden stress-related cravings known as emotional eating.

1. Evaluate your emotional status – Stay in touch with your emotions and be ready for food cravings when you feel upset. Problems or situations that create emotional turmoil can trigger impulsive eating. Many times, anticipating the urge is the best way to avoid giving in to temptation.

2. Substitute lower calorie food – It is very important to establish good eating habits without resorting to impulsive snacking, but on some occasions there is no way to avoid a dietary slip. However, instead of giving in to your favorite high-calorie treat, try to reach for lower calorie snacks such as fat free chips, low-fat ice cream, frozen yogurt and light microwave popcorn. They may not be full of nutrition, but they are better than a slice of cheesecake.

Below is a list of the foods most recommended by nutrition experts for helping people keep fit and get the nutrition the body needs.

**Spinach:** Every half cup of spinach only has 26 calories but lots of vitamin A and iron. Spinach is best eaten raw to protect its nutritional content.

**Beans:** No matter their color, beans are full of nutrition, and are as good sources of protein as meat. One ounce of dried beans has just 96 calories plus six grams of protein, one-tenth of the normal daily requirement.

**Honeydew melons:** Sweet and delicious honeydews offer lots of vitamin A and C for surprisingly few calories.

**Strawberries:** Beside their delicious taste, strawberries sport a remarkably high vitamin-to-calorie ratio.

**Peppers:** Whether spicy or not, peppers are good sources of nutrition. An average-sized green pepper contains lots of vitamins and minerals but just 35 calories.

**Tomatoes:** Eating a mid-sized tomato after a meal is good for health and will not add fat.

**Whole wheat bread:** This contains nine percent less calories, 20 percent more protein and twice the vitamin B of ordinary white bread, which is basically just worthless starch. One slice of whole wheat bread offers more fiber and less calories than a tomato.

**Turkey:** One ounce of skinless and boneless turkey only has 50 calories but plenty of protein, making it an ideal food for keeping fit.

**Flounder:** One pound of flounder contains only 360 calories, and four ounces is enough for a healthy serving.

3. Give in – If you have established a good track record of eating healthy and rarely (once a week) indulging in sweets or tempting junk food, then give in. It's OK. If you have a very strong craving for a particular food, then don't eat a substitute. Rid yourself of the temptation and eat the treat. This way you will satisfy the craving without eating a lot of other foods.

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Litang is famous for its boundless Maoya Grassland.

By Zhang Bo

At 4,187 meters above sea level, the town of Litang (理塘) is known, locally at least, as the highest county seat in the world.

Situated in the far west of Sichuan Province, 385 kilometers west of Kangding, capital of Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Litang is famous for its boundless Maoya Grassland.

It is known as Letong in Tibetan, "le" means bronze mirror and "tong" means grassland.

Once the site of a bazaar at which tea and horses were traded, Litang is the transportation, cultural and commercial center of southern Ganzi. Covering an area of 14,000 square kilometers, the county is populated by seven nationalities, with Tibetans accounting for 94 percent of the total.

The local economy is pastoral based. Nomads graze yaks, goats, sheep and horses on Litang's high plateau grasslands, as they have done for generations.

Litang is also host to a major horse racing festival in early August, attracting thousands of Tibetans from all over the plateau, and from Qinghai, Sichuan and Tibet.

#### Litang Monastery

Perched on a hill in the north of the county, Litang, or Keer Monastery (长青春科尔寺), is known locally as the Little

Potala Palace.

Once just a local lamasery, the monastery rose to prominence during the reign of Ming Dynasty Emperor Wanli (1573 - 1619), after a visit by the Third Dalai Lama. Rebuilt several times, it grew to become the largest monastery of the Gelug sect of Tibetan Buddhism in southern Ganzi. The Seventh and Tenth Dalai Lama both came from Litang Monastery.

There are currently over 800 Buddhist monks living in the monastery.

As well as various kinds of gilded bronze Buddha statues and Buddhist scriptures, there are many cultural relics preserved here, such as a saddle used by the Third Dalai Lama and frescos from the Ming and Qing Dynasties depicting classical Buddhist stories.

In 1996, the central government allocated a special fund of six million yuan to rebuild the monastery.

Suyou Suhua Hui, a temple fair, is held annually at the monastery on the 15th day of the first month of the Tibetan year.

#### Haizi Mountain

Located in the Haizi Mountain Natural Protected Area, Haizi Mountain (海子山) is a two hour drive west of Litang. Haizi is a Tibetan word meaning "mountain lake."

Lying on a high plateau dotted with lakes and freak geological formations



At the foot of Haizi Mountain

caused by glacial erosion, Haizi Mountain is the largest ancient glacial relic in the Tibet-Qinghai Plateau.

There are over 1,000 large and small lakes within this area, the highlight being two large lakes of the same size, called Jiemei (Sister) Lakes. The colors of the two lakes change constantly, sometimes they are green, sometimes blue, but they are never the same color at the same time.



Visiting pilgrims

The highest peak of Haizi Mountain is 5,080 meters above sea level, and from the summit, the more adventurous can enjoy a spectacle of endless snow capped peaks, and in the distance, Genie Peak, the third highest mountain in Sichuan.

Haizi Mountain was once home to dinosaurs, and in 1982, scientists found fossils of dinosaur's teeth on the mountainside.

Many species of wild animals inhabit the mountain, including deer, leopard, bear and wild goats and the mountain lakes are teeming with Qinghai carp.

#### Around Litang

Heading south from Litang, visitors will come to Daocheng (稻城), a two-street Tibetan town surrounded by wild country, where the hills and mountains



Litang monastery

all have a religious significance for the local Tibetan residents.

Daocheng county has a long cultural history, as is attested by its 14 monasteries. Gonggaling Lamasery, in a village on the way to Yading (亚丁), contains an exquisite bronze statue of Maitreya, the Future Buddha, presented by the Fifth Dalai Lama. Rubachaka Hot Spring village boasts private bathhouses at which visitors can soak away their travel fatigue.

**Getting there:** There are daily flights from Beijing to Chengdu. Otherwise take train T7 from Beijing West Railway Station to Chengdu (418 yuan hard sleeper), which takes 27 hours. From Chengdu, there are daily long distance buses to Litang from the Purchase Station of Ganzi Forestry Center on Wenhua Lu.

**Tip:** Because of the mid-summer rainy season, late May, October and early November are the best times to visit.

Photos by Bobby

#### MUSEUM WATCH

## Dabaotai Han Tomb



Coffin of King Liu Jian



Dragon headed jade and gold pillow  
Photos by Cui Hao

By Guo Yuandan

Dabaotai Han Tomb (大葆台汉墓) is the burial place of King of the Western Han Dynasty Liu Jian (73-45 BC) and his wife.

Discovered in the 1970s, the tomb is in the form of an underground palace, built entirely of wood. It comprises of a burial chamber, an antechamber (furnished in the manner of an imperial sitting room) and coffin chamber, with five coffins for the emperor. Some 15,800 cypress logs were used for the massive construction, which was then sealed with charcoal and gypsum to protect against the elements.

Though grave robbers and vandals have caused significant damage to the tomb, over 400 pottery, bronze, iron, jade, agate, lacquer and silk burial objects were salvaged. Woven brocade hat ribbons and iron axes stamped with the characters "Yuyang ironsmith," as well as local agricultural products are also on display in the museum.

**Where:** Guogongzhuang Village, Fengtai District (next to Beijing World Park) **Open:** daily 9 am - 4 pm **Admission:** 10 yuan **Tel:** 6373 6427

#### WALL WALKS



Photo by Lupi

## Zhen Bei Tai

By Huang Lisha

Zhen Bei Tai, or Pacify the North Platform, lies five kilometers north of Yulin (榆林), Shaanxi Province. Constructed in 1607 during the Ming Dynasty, it was built to guard Hongshan Maoyi Shichang, a large market where the Mongolians and the Han people met to trade their goods.

Part of the northwestern section of the Great Wall, Zhen Bei Tai is a well restored four-story square structure, 30 meters high, and 320 meters in circumference.

Standing on the top of the

platform offers a panoramic view of the surrounding hills. There are ruins of two small fortresses near Zhen Bei Tai, both of which also served to protect the market during the Ming Dynasty.

A walk of one kilometer to the southwest of Zhen Bei Tai takes you to another attraction - Hong Shi Xia (Red Rock Gorges). There are ancient inscriptions on the cliff surface.

**Getting there:** Take train T55, T41, or T131 from Beijing West Railway Station to Xi'an, then bus to Yulin.